DEVOTED COMPANIONS

Ma'el Khairabadi

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INTRODUCTION

The Holy Companions (May Allah be pleased with them), that is, the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are those great personalities of the world who are superior to and greater than anyone except the Prophets and Messengers of Allah (peace be upon them). By their achievements they earned the pleasure of Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

When we read the life histories of the Holy Companions, we feel a longing to follow their example. We feel an urge to be firm in our beliefs and to establish the faith of Islam. We believe that had not Allah created those wonderful people, our religion would not have come to us in its pristine form. Allah had caused those noble Companions of our Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to safeguard our religion. Next to the lives of the Apostles of Allah (peace be on them), it is the lives of these sages which serve as the best models for us.

The manner in which the Holy Companions went forward with the Islamic movement, the sacrifices which they made in support of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and the zeal and

enthusiasm with which they worked for spreading the message of Islam, carry a good lesson for all human beings of the world, specially the Muslims. For a long time now there has been a feeling that the life–stories of those torch–bearers of Islam should be presented to our children and young persons, boys and girls, for correcting the ills of our present society. This book is intended to fulfil this need and it is hoped that it will be of benefit to our young generation and shall impart especially to them desirable training in the Islamic way of life. May Allah accept this work and reward us in the hereafter.

MUS'AB BIN 'UMAIR

(May Allah be pleased with him)

Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair (May Allah be pleased with him) was a very handsome young man. He was the son of 'Umair, a wealthy person. He brought up his son in quite a luxurious fashion. Mus'ab enjoyed the best of food, finest dresses and the best perfumes. Whenever Mus'ab passed through the streets, dressed in costly clothes and profusely perfumed, the sweet smell scented the atmosphere all around and the people gazed at him with amazement and appreciation. His beauty and charm was the talk of the town. Every person knew that Mus'ab's parents were bringing up their son with great affection and care. Whenever the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) talked of him, he said:

"There is nobody more handsome in Makka than Mus'ab. There is no person in the city better clothed and fed than Mus'ab. There is no child brought up with more affection and love than him."

Due to his charming personality and being a lovely son of wealthy parents, every one —young or old—had a great regard for him. When he embraced

Islam he was given a respectable place in Muslim society. But it was not due to his beauty, charm, good dress, good manners or wealth, but due to his piety and fear of God.

When he embraced Islam, he was put to severe hardships and torture. The beauty and charm of his person faded. He was also deprived of the affection and care of his parents. But his virtues and piety won the appreciation of Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). In his pursuit for winning the favour of Allah and his His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), Mus'ab cared neither for good food, nor good dress. He was no more inclined towards costly cosmetics and perfumes, instead he devoted himself whole–heartedly to serve the noble cause of Islam.

Mus'ab accepted Islam at a time when life had been made unbearable for Muslims. He was turned out of his home. Nobody talked to him. He was socially boycotted. He had to suffer countless miseries. This pampered young man embraced Islam at a time when those who believed in Islam were refused food and water and were thrown in dark prison cells. Many blood–thirsty tyrants, not satisfied with the infliction of pain and injury, often murdered their Muslim victims. There were other hard–hearted fellows who had invented various

forms of tortures to inflict on poor Muslims. They enjoyed the writhing and wriggling of their Muslim prisoners. A Muslim thrown flat on the burning Arabian sand in the mid–day sun with very heavy stones placed over his breast, or forcibly stretched on red hot coals to the enjoyment of the spectators, was an every day scene in Makka.

Hadrat Mus'ab accepted Islam during that difficult period. One day a non–believer saw him offering prayers. He at once informed his parents who turned angrily to their son. All the affection of his mother vanished. All the love and care of his father changed into anger and grief. They admonished him. But, when they knew that he was firm, they tied him with ropes and threw him in a dark cell. He was kept in prison for a long time, but his belief in Islam was so firm that the torment of prison did not change his mind. He sacrificed everything and remained steadfast.

When the Muslims were ordered to migrate to Abyssinia, this young man, brought up like a Prince, also went to Abyssinia, alongwith the other devotees of Allah. When he returned from Abyssinia, people saw in him a different person – all the lustre and gaiety was gone. He who would have scoffed at the most precious raiment, was wearing a

dress made of coarse, worn–out blanket. The spectacle evoked amazement and awe among the onlookers. His mother, too, pitied her son's condition and repented the harsh treatment she had shown to him.

Meanwhile, Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair presented himself to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in such a condition that he had only a piece of skin with patches here and there to cover his body. When the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saw this, they hung their heads in sorrow. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) observed, "Al–hamd–o–Lillah! Now the condition of the world and worldly people should change. This is the young man who had no equal in Makka in the luxurious style in which he was brought up. But the regard for virtue and love for Allah and his Holy Prophet have made him indifferent to all wordly pleasures."

During this period many people of Madina had accepted Islam. They requested the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to send them a preacher for teaching them the fundamentals of Islam. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) selected Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair for this purpose; he gave him some instructions and sent him to Madina. Later

events showed that Mus'ab bin 'Umair proved himself worthy of the confidence reposed in him.

On reaching Madina Hadrat Mus'ab began to perform the duty entrusted to him with all the sagacity necessary for a preacher. He went from door to door to convey to the people the message of Islam. Initially he talked to each person in terms which that person could understand, and then presented to him the message of Islam at the right moment. He recited before the people selected verses of the Holy Qur'an which had a profound effect on their minds. He treated his visitors very politely. He had a natural gift for soft speech and people who approached him instantly became his friends. An incident is related below as an example:

One day Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair was explaining some Islamic precepts to a group of Muslims. By chance an elite of Madina, Sa'ad bin Ma'az, happened to come there. He had heard about Mus'ab bin 'Umair's preaching of Islam and was very angry with him. He said to an influential person, Usaid bin Huzair, "Turn this preacher of Islam out of your neighbourhood. He has turned many persons away from the path of their ancestral faith. If I was not a relation of Sa'ad (with whom Mus'ab was staying), I would not have asked you to do that, but would have

done it myself." Usaid at once took his spear and went to Sa'ad's house. He called both of them and said furiously, "Who has called you here to lead the people astray? If your lives are dear to you, go away from this place at once."

To this Hadrat Mus'ab replied very gently, "Please sit down and listen to us calmly. If you like what we say, then you may accept it otherwise we shall leave this place." Usaid stuck his spear in the ground and sat down to listen to what Mus'ab had to say. Hadrat Mus'ab recited some verses of the Holy Qur'an. He explained to the audience the identity of Allah as the Creator, the Master and the Merciful, in such an impressive manner that in a short time Usaid was filled with the light of Iman and he exclaimed, "What an excellent faith, How can I embrace Islam?" After that he recited the Kalima and embraced Islam.

After some time Sa'ad bin Mu'az also arrived there, mad with rage. But, he too was softened like wax by the sweet eloquence of Hadrat Mus'ab, and there and then recited the Kalmia about the Oneness of Allah and became a Muslim. Soon after all the inhabitants of Madina except a few, embraced Islam.

It was in Madina that Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair did a remarkable work which shows his intelligence and tact in propagating Islam. When the number of

Muslims increased in Madina, he organised them in a body and requested permission of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to start offering Friday prayers in congregation.

When the permission was granted his first task was to deliver a very impressive sermon. Then he led the congregational Friday prayers with great devotion. In this way Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair had the honour of starting the Friday prayers in Madina. True, when Allah is pleased with a person, He makes such noble works done through him. The successes which by the grace of Allah Hadrat Mus'ab achieved at Madina were constantly reported to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). When Mus'ab's mission had been fully accomplished he led a group of Muslims to Makka to invite the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to come to Madina. On arrival at Makka the first thing which Hadrat Mus'ab did was to approach the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to give him a full report of the success of his mission. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was very pleased with Mus'ab's account. What more does a true Muslim (Momin) require than that Allah and his Prophet be pleased with him?

Hadrat Mus'ab's mother learnt that her son had returned home at last; and that he was staying with

someone else. She felt annoyed and sent him word: "My son! you have returned to a town in which I reside. But woe to me! You have not come to see me!" The reply which Hadrat Mus'ab sent to his mother shows his sincere devotion to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He said, "I will not see anybody before I have paid homage to the Holy Prophet" (peace be upon him).

The account of Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair (peace be upon him) given above presents before us an exemplary proof of the great love he had for Islam and the pains he took in presenting Islam to the non–believers. He sacrificed everything he possessed for the sake of Islam – his charm and beauty, his wealth and worldly belongings, his luxurious style of living and shed his attachment to his parents, his home–land, his people and his own country. In short everything which was dear to him, was sacrificed by him for Islam. But this chapter of the history of Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair (Allah be pleased with him) will remain incomplete without an account of his death.

It may be recollected that Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair (Allah be pleased with him) was not only very handsome, he did not only possess the qualities of submission and sacrifice, and he was not only a

master of high intelligence and good eloquence, but he was also a gallant soldier, a fearless warrior and an able general. It was because of his gallantry that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had entrusted him with the honour of carrying the banner of war, in the battle of Badr. At the battle of Uhud also he got the rare honour of holding the Muslim banner. The way in which the high office of holding the war banner was discharged in the two battles by this great devotee of Islam may be judged from the events of the Battle of Uhud.

In the battle of Uhud it so happened that the battle was lost for a while by a casual mistake of the Muslims. The non–believers of Makka attacked the Muslims from the rear and thus disorganised the Muslim army. At that critical time Hadrat Mus'ab (Allah be pleased with him) kept the Islamic banner flying high. He attacked the forces of the enemy all alone. He could not think of acting against the order of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and making a retreat. At that time many non–believers attacked the Muslim warrior simultaneously and surrounded him. There were countless attacks on him by sword and spear. At last he fell a martyr.

When the bearer of Islamic banner fell, Abul Room bin 'Umair (Allah be pleased with him),

brother of the martyr, moved forward and took up the banner. He protected its honour till the last.

When the battle came to an end the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) stood by the dead body of Mus'ab bin 'Umair (Allah be pleased with him) and recited the verse:

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوْا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللّٰهَ عَلَيْهِ

(Minal momeneena rejalun sadaqu ma 'ahadul-laha'alaihe) **Meaning:** *"There are some persons among the devoted Muslims (momeneen) who acted true to their promise made to Allah."*

Then the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed the dead body thus:—

"When I saw you for the first time in Makka there was nobody more handsome and well–dressed than you. But I see that today your hair is uncombed and only a sheet of cloth covers your body!"

The martyrs of Uhud could not get proper shrouds because in those days Muslims were poor and lacked money. Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair (peace be upon him) had only a sheet of cloth over his body; if the head was covered, the feet were bare and when the feet were covered the head was left bare. At last his head was covered with the shroud–cloth and the feet were covered with grass. Such was

the shroud of Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair (Allah be pleased with him) – the great martyr.

HADRAT HAMZA

Leader of the Martyrs

Hadrat Hamza was related to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in several ways. He was the Holy Prophet's uncle on the one hand and, on the other, he was the son of his maternal aunt.[1] Besides these family ties, he was also the Holy Prophet's foster brother. Again there was not much difference in their ages, Hamza was only two years older than the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). But in Islam no person is superior to the other by virtue of his race, family, nation or country. The criterion of superiority, in Islam, is fear of Allah, piety and devotion to the cause of Islam. Allah had favoured Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) with excellence in the arts of wrestling and swordsmanship. Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) used his talents and experience to its best in the cause of Islam and earned the title of "Leader of the Martyrs" from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

1. Hadrat Hamza's mother, Hala bint Wahab, was the cousin of Hadrat Amina, mother of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

Hadrat Hamza was very fond of wrestling and hunting. He took great interest in swordsmanship and archery.

The call of Tauhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah) was though given in his family first and spread fast throughout the city and 38 persons embraced Islam but Hadrat Hamza did not pay any attention to it in the beginning. He was so attached to his pastimes that he hardly got any time to take notice of the new developments in his town. However, Allah turned him towards Islam in a peculiar way.

One day he was returning from hunting. As he entered the city he met a slave–girl. She said, "Had you come a bit earlier, you would have seen the condition of your nephew, Muhammad (peace be upon him). He was preaching his religion in the Ka'aba when Abu Jahl wildly abused and teased him. But Muhammad (peace be upon him) did not retaliate and went away with a broken heart."

Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) was enraged. He rushed towards the Holy Ka'ba. He was so excited that he did not even pay heed to his friends whom he met in the way. He went to the Ka'aba and found Abu Jahl sitting there with his companions. He pounced upon Abu Jahl and struck him with his bow on the head with such force that his skull

cracked. His companions ran to his rescue and said: "Hamza! It seems you, too, have forsaken your religion."

Hamza said, "If truth dawns upon me, who is there to hold me back? Well I declare now and here that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is a Prophet of Allah, and whatever he says is true. By Allah, I cannot go against Islam. If you can, try to stop me."

When Abu Jahl saw Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) in such a furious temper he asked his companions to leave Hamza alone.

Those were the days when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had taken refuge in the house of Arqam bin Abi Arqam to protect the poor and weak Muslims from the torture and torments of the non- believers in Makka. People could not dare to talk about Islam. But fearless as he was, Hadrat Hamza proclaimed the truth of Islam openly. This shows that no one among the people of Arabia had the courage to challenge Hamza (Allah be pleased with him). The fact is that with the acceptance of Islam by Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) the whole situation suddenly changed. Now the non-believers had to think twice before inflicting any injury on the Muslims. Thus Hadrat Hamza (Allah be

pleased with him) showed his courage and valour for the first time in the cause of Allah.

The acceptance of Islam by Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) did upset the enemies of Islam. They held meetings to decide new course of action. They considered several suggestions to suppress Islam. In their frustration they decided to put an end to the life of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) by any means.

They offered a big reward for the purpose. Another man of great courage and spirit in Makka rose with a sword in his hand and marched towards the house of Arqam bin Abi Arqam. He was 'Umar, who was later known as 'Umar the Great, and second Caliph of Islam. Many Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) were present there. When they came to know that 'Umar was coming they were perturbed. But Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) said, "We don't care. Let him come. If he is coming in sincerity, well and good, otherwise I shall strike off his head with his own sword."

Such was the courage and bravery of Hadrat Hamza and his confidence in the strength bestowed upon him by Allah.

The Arabs were very proud of their superior race and blood. This vanity proved hurdle in embracing Islam for many a sensible persons. On the battlefield of Badr, Abul Bakhtari, pointed towards the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and said to Abu Jahl, "Tell me the truth and say what do you think of him?" Abu Jahl said, "No doubt he is a truthful person. But, we cannot afford to sit at par with persons like Bilal!" Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) was a slave and had embraced Islam. In those days the slaves were regarded so low and mean that they could not claim any respect. The manner in which they were treated stands no comparison with the treatment shown to the Indian untouchables and the African Negroes, these days. But the teachings of Islam had changed the devoted Companions, so much so that they never made any discirmination between man and man on the basis of race, colour, wealth or caste. Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) was a very good example of it. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) declared his notable slave, Zaid bin Harith (Allah be pleased with him) as the brother in Islam of his uncle Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) and they became so dear to each other that whenever one of them went out, he appointed the other as his heir and gave him

instructions, by way of his will, in every matter. Thus Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) preferred Islam to everything else. He passed his life in total submission to Allah only. He gave up hunting and wrestling and devoted his whole time and energies to the cause of Islam.

In the thirteenth year of the Prophet–hood, Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) migrated alongwith the other Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to Madina. Here he got ample opportunities of displaying his strength and courage in the service of Islam. In the first instance the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) deputed thirty persons to check the caravan of the non–believers of Makka under the command of Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) and, for the first time in the history of Islam, Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) was entrusted the banner of Islam.

As this small detachment moved ahead it met a caravan of Quraish under the leadership of Abu Jahl. The caravan consisted of three hundred horsemen. Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) decided to confront the three hundred persons with his handful of Companions. Finding Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him), Majdi bin 'Amar, a

person from Makka intervened and prevented an encounter. Both the parties withdrew to their positions. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) sent him on various military expeditions with very few persons at his command but he always succeeded in his assignments.

A little later the battle of Badr was fought. 'Utba, the most experienced and brave man of the Makkan Quraish came forward along with his brother and son. From the side of Muslims, some Ansari youngmen advanced to meet them. But 'Utba was so proud of his descent and bravery that he took it as an insult to face persons below his standard and status. He cried out, "O Muhammad we do not want to fight against persons below our level. Send our equals to us." The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) then sent Hadrat Hamza, Hadrat Ali and Hadrat 'Ubaidah (May Allah be pleased with them) to meet the challenge. Hadrat Hamza attackad 'Utba and killed him with the first blow. Next came Taeema bin Adi, another renowned warrior to take revenge. But he too met the same fate at the first stroke. The infidels infuriated by their loss made a full fledged attack on the Muslims. A fierce battle took place. Hadrat Hamza wore a turban with an ostrich plume over it and thus looked very

prominent among the Muslim warriors. He held swords in both of his hands and killed a number of infidels including their great warriors. The enemy could not face the fierce onslaught and took to heels. The Muslims captured a number of infidels including some nobles of Makka. Some of the prisoners asked, "Who was the man with the ostrich plume?"

"Hamza" (Allah be pleased with him) was the answer.

"He inflicted great losses on us," they said.

The infidels of Makka suffered heavily in this battle. They did not forget their defeat and raised a big army next year to avenge the defeat and capture Madian. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), along with his devoted Companions, met the enemy at Uhud. A wrestler, Saba, came forward and challenged the Muslim warriors. Hadrat Hamza accepted his challenge and said, "Do you dare to fight against Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)?" Then he struck Saba with a fatal blow and killed him.

Soon a fierce battle started. Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) had killed many a promint persons of the Quraish in the battle of Badr. So the Quraish were after his blood. They made many a concerted attacks on Hadrat Hamza

(Allah be pleased with him) but every time he repelled their attack and killed about thirty infidels.

Jubair bin Mut'im had specially deputed a slave named Wahshi to take revenge for his uncleTaeema bin Adi. The slave was promised a handsome reward in addition to his freedom. Wahshi hid himself behind a rock in the battlefield and waited for an opportunity to attack Hadrat Hamza. As soon as Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) came within range, Wahshi threw his poisoned sharp weapon with full force to hit Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him). It was such a deadly weapon that Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) succumbed to his injury.

Men and women of the infidels rejoiced at the martyrdom of Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him). They sang and danced. Abu Sufyan's wife, Hinda's father, 'Utba, was killed in the battle of Badr by Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him). She was so revengeful that she brought out the liver of Hadrat Hamza from his dead body and tried to munch and devour it, but she could not swallow and spat it out. Then she cut off the nose and ears of the dead body and made a necklaceof them. When the

Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) heard of it he said:

"Did she eat any part of the body?"

"No," was the reply.

He (peace be upon him) said: "Allah will not let any part of Hamza's body go to Hell."

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) then came to the dead body of his uncle. Hinda had mutilated the corpse and made it a horrible sight. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saw the body and his heart was moved. He said, "Allah bless you, for you looked after your relations and surpassed others in noble deeds. But for the grief of Safia, I would have left you here in this condition for animals and birds to eat. Then you could be raised from their stomachs on the day of Destiny".

Hazrat Safia was the sister of Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him). When she heard the news of her brother's martyrdom, she went to see the face of her departed brother. But the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) did not allow her to go near the corpse and sent her back with words of consolation. Before her departure, Hadrat Safia gave two sheets of cloth to her son Hadrat Zubair (Allah be pleased with him) to make the shroud. By chance the dead body of an Ansari was also lying

nearby. So he gave one sheet of cloth to cover the body of the Ansari martyr. A single sheet was, however, insufficient to cover the body of Hadrat Hamza. If the head was covered, the feet were left uncovered; and when the feet were covered, the head was left bare. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) therefore advised to cover the head and place grass and leaves over the feet. It was in this pathetic manner that the shroud of "the leader of Martyres" was prepared. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) himself led the funeral prayers. Then the coffins of all the martyrs of Uhud were placed, one by one, in a line. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) led the funeral prayers for each martyr individually. Thus after seventy prayers, the martyrs were laid to rest.

The extent of love the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had for Hadrat Hamza can be judged from the following incident:

Wahshi, the assasin of Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) embraced Islam after some time and presented himself to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) who said:

"Are you Wahshi"

"Yes, sir", was the answer.

"Did you kill Hamza?" said the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

"Whatever you know is correct, sir," the man said.

"Can you hide your face from me for ever?" Looking at you will always remind me of what you did to my dear uncle." Said the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).[1]

Wahshi left the place at once and did not show his face during the life time of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

This was the great martyr of Islam, who devoted all his God–gifted qualities to the service of Islam, from the day he embraced it.

Hadrat Hamza (Allah be pleased with him) had a number of children but they all died during their childhood. Only one, a girl named Amama, survived, who was left in Makka at the time of migration.

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1. Wahshi sorely repented his misdeed. He thought of making amends for the great harm he had done to the cause of Islam and the severe pain he had caused to the Holy Pophet (peace be upon him). So, after the time of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), during the Khilafat of Hadrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) when an army was despatched to crush Masailma Kazzab. Wahshi also took part in the crusade. He killed the wicked enemy, Musailma Kazzab, and thus made amends for the wrong done by him to the cause of Islam.

After the conquest of Makka, when the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and his Companions (Allah be pleased with them) were returning to Madina, Amama ran after them crying: O my brother, O my brother!" Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) took her in his arms and said, "O Prophet of Allah, let me take this girl under my care. She is my cousin. I will look after her." Hadrat Zaid bin Harisa presented his claim over her and said, "I am Hamza's brother and custodian of his will. She is my niece. I have a better claim over her."

Hadrat Ja'far Tayyar pressed his claim saying, "She is my cousin and her maternal aunt is my wife."

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) gave his decision in favour of Hadrat Ja'far Tayyar (Allah be pleased with him) since a maternal aunt is equal to the mother in relation.

HADRAT 'ABBAS BIN 'ABDUL MUTTALIB

(Allah be pleased with him)

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had 10 or 11 uncles. Four of them earned a great name in history—Abu Talib, Abu Lahab, Hadrat Hamza and Hadrat 'Abbas. Abu Talib earned prominence because he brought up his orphan nephew, Hadrat Muhammad (peace be upon him), with great love and care and always supported and protected him. Abu Lahab got the evil reputation because of his enmity with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He always tried his best to destroy Islam. Both Hadrat Hamza and Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with them) embraced Islam and remained firm and strong in their faith in Islam. They could sacrifice anything and take any risk to earn the pleasure of Allah. They proved their loyalty to Islam by their words and deeds, putting their resources and their life at stake to serve the cause of Islam. Though 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) was an uncle of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), there was not much differences in their ages. He was

nearly two and a half years older than the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He had a great love for his nephew. Wherever they worked together, Hadrat 'Abbas never allowed the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to undergo any hard work. Once the Holy Ka'aba was under repairs, everybody from Quraish, young or old, took part in this sacred project. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his uncle, Hadrat 'Abbas were bringing stones along with other children. While working, the Holy Prophet's shoulder was bruised. His Uncle 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) was upset and without any hesitation he took off his own loin–cloth and put it on the shoulders of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) as a pad to protect him from further bruises.

His love for the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) developed more and more with the age. Even before embracing Islam he supported the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in every matter. When he embraced Islam he devoted himself whole–heartedly to the mission of the Prophet (peace be upon him). When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) conveyed the message of Islam to the people in Makka and invited them to submit before Allah, Hadrat 'Abbas did not respond apparently but he

was fully aware of the impact and implications of the message of Islam and had all his sympathies with it. Thus, when 70 Madinities approached the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in the valley of Mina, during the Hajj session, and requested him to migrate to Madina, Hadrat Abbas was also present at the secret meeting. The speech which he made on that occasion not only showed his vast experience and sincerity of purpose, but also revealed that he understood fully the difficulties in the way of the Islamic movement. He said:

"You know that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is highly respected and revered in our family. We have always protected him against the enemies. Now he wants to accompany you. If you can stand by his side till death, I do not object; otherwise you should not take the risk."

The Anṣars gave assurance of their sincere and full support. Hadrat 'Abbas was satisfied, and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) migrated to Madina after a few days. Hadrat 'Abbas stayed in Makka, but his heart was with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). At Madina, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) conquered Khyber, a stronghold of the Jews. Somebody in Makka spread the rumour that the Muslims have suffered a smashing

defeat in Khyber and that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has been taken prisoner and a number of his followers have been killed.

The Makkans were jubilant at the news, but there was mourning and wailing at the house of Hadrat 'Abbas. Hadrat 'Abbas could not believe it and sought confirmation of the news from his sources. Soon he came to know that the news was entirely false and that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had gained a decisive victory over the enemies. Then the joy of Hadrat 'Abbas knew no bounds. He changed his dress, took hold of his walking stick, and arriving at Ka'aba began to make rounds of the sacred house in a blissful mood. People taunted him saying:

"By Allah! such a great calamity, and such a show of resignation!"

Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) retorted, "By the same Allah, of whom you have sworn, what you say is quite incorrect. You must know that Khyber has been conquered, and every inch of its land is in the possession of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his followers."

When the Makkans made enquiries they found that the information of Hadrat 'Abbas was correct. They felt small and humiliated.

Not only did Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) share the sorrows and joys of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), but he conveyed important news of Makka to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) though he was still out of the pale of Islam. He also helped the poor Muslims who could not migrate to Madina for lack of resources. Whenever Hadrat 'Abbas thought of migrating to Madina, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) stopped him and said: "It is better if you stay in Makka. Just as I am the last of the line of prophets, you shall be the last person to migrate from Makka.

The Quraish of Makka thought that 'Abbas was attached to Muhammad (peace be upon him) only because of the relation of blood but he did not contribute to the faith of Islam. On this assumption they compelled him to fight against the Muslims in the battle of Badr. Hadrat 'Abbas had to go along with them to the battlefield. But the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) knew fully well the position of Hadrat 'Abbas(Allah be pleased with him) and had issued instructions to his Companions saying:

"Do not kill 'Abbas, if you happen to meet him in battle, since he has been brought into the battlefield by force."

In the battle of Badar, Allah bestowed victory upon the Muslims. Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) was taken prisoner. He was tied with ropes so tightly that he groaned with pain. Knowing him in distress, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) could not sleep. As soon as the holy Companions came to know of it, they loosened the bonds of Hadrat 'Abbas.

Such was the love and affection between the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his uncle Hadrat 'Abbas. But in the matter of justice and principles no love and affection did count. When the question of releasing the captives on payment of ransom arose, Hadrat 'Abbas was asked to pay a heavy sum of money. In reply, Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) argued that he was a Muslim by heart but could not dare to disclose it because of the situation obtaining in Makka. The infidels had forced him to take part in the battle of Badar. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Allah alone knows what is there in one's heart. If you speak the truth, Allah will reward you. But no concession can be given to you."

Hadrat 'Abbas said that he was a poor man. This plea, too, was not accepted. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "I know you have

deposited a big amount of money with your wife," Hadrat 'Abbas was awe–stricken. He said, "By Allah, no one else knew about that money besides myself and my wife. No doubt you are the Prophet of Allah." Then he paid a large sum of money in ransom. This brought release to him and two other captives, his nephew Aqil and Naufal bin Haris.

In short, Hadrat 'Abbas stayed in Makka for a considerable time without publicizing his views. He got permission to migrate to Madina shortly before the conquest of Makka. So he took his wife and children with him and reached Madina. There he publicly proclaimed that he had embraced Islam. This sent a wave of joy and happiness among the Muslims and Hadrat 'Abbas began to support the Muslims openly.

Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) was very wealthy before embracing Islam. After the death of his father, he took charge of the management of the Ka'aba and of providing the pilgrims with water. He performed this duty very efficiently till his migration to Madina. His source of income was trade. He lent money on intrest. After the conquest of Makka in 10 A.H. the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) delivered a farewell sermon on occasion

of his last Hajj in which he declared that usury was prohibited (haram) by Allah. He said:

> Henceforth the business of lending money on interest is forbidden. And the first interest, that I declare to be no more payble is that payable to 'Abbas bin 'Abdul Muttalib."

After this proclamation all the income of Hadrat 'Abbas from interest stopped. The business in Makka had already closed at the time of his migration to Madina. So the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) helped him with the property secured in battles and also gave him some portion of the income from Fidak, a garden which had come to the share of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Hadrat 'Abbas spent this money very generously. He was a very hospitable and kind- hearted man. Whenever he lifted his hands in prayer, tears came to his eyes. That is why his prayers were very effective. During the caliphate of Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him), once there were no rains and the country faced a dreadful famine. Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) requested Hadrat 'Abbas to pray for Allah's mercy. As soon as Hadrat 'Abbas raised his hands in prayer the clear sky was covered with dense clouds and it rained so heavily that there was plenty of water for a good harvest.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had a great regard and respect for Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) on account of his extreme love and affection as well as his great qualities and character. If any one put him to grief, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was displeased and used to say: 'Abbas is the uncle of the Prophet of Allah and an uncle is equal in status to the father."

Sometimes he (peace be upon him) would say: 'Abbas is the uncle of the Prophet of Allah. He is the most generous among the Quraish and has great regard for his relations." Once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed Hadrat 'Abbas thus:

"By Allah Who is my Creator, whosoever does not love you for the sake of Allah and his Prophet, will be devoid of faith. My uncle is just like my father to me." When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) passed away, people went to Hadrat 'Abbas to offer their condolences.

Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) had a powerful voice. In the battle-field when nothing could be audible in the noise of the clash of weapons and the shouts of soliders, Hadrat 'Abbas's voice could be easily heard. Once he said: "In the battle of Hunain, I was holding the reins of the horse of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and was running

by its side. At the height of the battle the enemy made such a forceful attack that the Muslims were dispersed. The Holy Prophet cried, 'Abbas! call the spearmen'. I had a loud voice, so I shouted, "O you people with spears! Where are you?" The retreating warriors heard the call and turned towards the enemy and made them retreat. Thus a lost battle was won."

A simple story is related here about Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) which contains many a lesson for those who wish to seek the pleasure of Allah.

During the days of Hadrat 'Umar Farooq, some people complained that the water outlet on the roof of Hadrat 'Abbas opened towards the holy Mosque. Whenever it rains the water collected on his roof falls in the courtyard of the mosque and the people offering prayers are put to inconvenience. The Caliph ordered the water outlet to be closed. Hadrat 'Abbas field a suit against the Caliph. In his petition he argued that the water outlet was in the same position even during the days of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and that it had been closed without his permission.

The Qadi heard the case. He called witnesses and then gave the verdict in favour of Hadrat

'Abbas. Hadrat 'Abbas opened the water outlet in the presence of Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (peace be upon him). When it was done, the uncle of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"O, leader of the faithfull. Had I forsaken my claim, the people might have suspected that I had done so because of your fear and to gain your favour. Now that I have won the case, I donate this house for the sake of Allah. Now you may use this house as you wish."

Thus in the pursuit of seeking pleasure of Allah, Hadrat 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) died at the age of 88. Among his children Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) was a renowned Companion of the Holy Prophet.

HADRAT JA'FAR TAYYAR

(Allah be pleased with him)

Hadrat Ja'far Tayyar was the brother of Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him). His father's name was Abu Talib. By this relation Hadrat Ja'far was a first cousin of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). After the death of his parents and his grandfather, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had lived with Abu Talib. Hence Hadrat 'Ali and Hadrat Ja'far Tayyar (Allah be pleased with them) loved him very much. Since they had been so close, they were well acquainted with each other. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) loved Hadrat Ja'far not because he was his first cousin, but because of his virtues.

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) preached Islam to the members of his own family for the first time, Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) embraced Islam at once. After a few days when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was offering his prayers with Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him). Abu Talib suddenly came in with Hadrat Ja'far. Abu Talib saw his son and nephew engaged

in prayers with great reverence. He was much impressed by this scene. He said to Hadrat Ja'far, "My dear son, you may also join them," Hadrat Ja'far (Allah be pleased with him) at once stood at the left side of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He said the prayers. For the first time in his life he felt such exceeding joy in offering worship to one Allah that never again did he think of worshipping any other god. He testified faith in one Allah and ever remained a faithful follower of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

In those days it was not easy to follow Islam. The infidels of Makka constantly harassed and persecuted even highly placed persons for the 'crime' of embracing Islam. When Abu Talib was alive he restrained the infidels to a great extent with his personal influence and kind temper. But after his death the persecution by the infidels became unbearable. Hazrat Ja'far was no exception. When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saw that the cruelties of the Quraish had become intolerable, he suggested the Muslims to migrate to Abyssinia. Thereby a party of Muslims migrated to Abyssinia. Hadrat Ja'far accompanied them.

The immigrants had hardly reached Abyssinia when a group of Quraish pagans arrived. Their sole

purpose was to bring back the immigrants to Makka and take revenge upon them. They presented themselves in the court of the Najashi, king of Abyssinia, and said.

"O king, some of our misguided youth have forsaken the religion of their ancestors and have embraced a new faith. They have run away from their motherland to your kingdom. We have been sent by their elders and relations to you with the request that they be made to go back with us. We hope you will kindly allow us to take them back."

Najashi was a very intelligent and good–natured king. He did not think it proper to hand over the immigrants to them wihtout making an eqnuiry. He called the Muslims to his court and said: "What is that religion for which you left the religion of your anscestors?"

The Muslims deputed Hadrat Ja'far to answer Najashi. On that occasion Hadrat Ja'far delivered a remarkable speech before the non–Muslims. His speech contained good criticism of the existing society on the one hand, and on the other, it was a comprehensive account of Islam, and its values. This speech, though short, was very eloquent. He said:

"O king, our people were ignorant and wild. We worshipped idols. We ate the flesh of the dead. We

committed evil. We teased our neighbours. The strong tormented the weak. We usurped the rights of our relations. Oppression and evil was our daily routine of life, when Allah, with all His kindness sent towards us a man from amongst us as His Prophet. We knew him well and found him most honest and trustworthy, pious and virtuous, who commanded great respect and confidence in Makka. He forbade us to worship idols and associate other deities with Allah.

"He convinced us of the Oneness of Allah, and truth and honesty. He taught us how to love the neighbours and relations and avoid telling lies. He told us not to murder any one without reason. He prohibited deception, wrangling and evil and warned to keep our hands off the orphans' property. He forbade us to make false accusation against anybody. He called the people to abandon idolatory, believe in One God, offer prayers, observe fasts and pay zakat. We have full faith in him and follow the way of life shown by him. We abandoned idolatory and submitted to One God. We came to know of lawful and unlawful. Consequently our own community and our friends turned into foes because of the change in our life and our views. They were determined to bring us back to idolatory and other

evil practices by tormenting us and even take our lives if necessary. When their brutalities became unbearable we migrated to your country as suggested by Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)."

Najashi listened to this speech attentively and then he said: "Recite to me some verses from the Book revealed to your Prophet." Hadrat Ja'far (Allah be pleased with him), recited some verses from Surah Maryam. Najashi was deeply moved. He said: "By Allah! Your Holy Book and our Holy Book, the Old Testament, get light from the same source." Then he told the Makkans very plainly, "By Allah, I will never hand over the Muslims to you."

Having failed in their trick, the Quraish thought of another plan. They again presented themselves in Najashi's court and said: "Sire, Do you know what is the opinion of these Muslims about Christ?" Najashi called the Muslims again for a reply The Muslims hesitated because Islam refutes the Christians' belief that Christ is the son of God. They feared that Najashi would get angry on hearing the truth. But Hadrat Ja'far (Allah be pleased with him) resolved that he would speak the truth at all cost and that he would present before Najashi the correct view of Islam about Jesus Christ. He said, "We believe in Christ as a devotee of Allah, a Prophet

with the Muslim flag in his hand, and pushed the enemy back. But the overwhelming number of the enemy held sway everywhere. Hadrat Ja'far's whole body had innumerable wounds upon it. He lost both of his hands. He was so dauntless that when one hand was cut off and it fell to the ground, he supported the banner with his second hand. And, when the second hand was also cut off, the bold solider of Islam did not allow the banner to fall down, but pressed it to his breast, and the Romans killed him in that position.

'Abdullah bin 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) had also taken part in this battle. He says, "When I searched out the dead body of Ja'afar (Allah be pleased with him), I counted fifty wounds on his body at the front; the number of all the wounds over the whole body was more than ninety. But, by Allah, he had no wounds on his back."

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) knew about the course of events in this battle through angel Jibreel (Gabriel). Tears began to flow from his eyes. Gabriel had also informed the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that Allah had given two wings to Hazrat Ja'far in place of his lost arms, with which he was flying about in the Eternal Gardens. In the Arabic language the flier is termed

and His spirit." Najashi picked up a piece of straw from the ground and said: "By God, Christ, son of Mary, is nothing more than what you said, not even to the worth of an straw".

The Quraish returned without any success, and Hadrat Ja'far stayed in Abyssinia with other Muslims. Meanwhile the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) migrated to Madina from Makka. Khyber was conquered in the seventh year after Hijra (migration). Then, the Muslim immigrants in Abyssinia also went to Madina. The love and affection the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had for Hadrat Ja'far, may be judged from the way they both met. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) embraced his dear cousin as he came to him and kissing his forehead with affection said, "I do not know whether the return of Ja'far has pleased me more, or the conquest of Khyber."

In the eighth year of Hijrah three thousand Muslims met one lakh Romans in the battle of Mauta. Hadrat Zaid bin Haritha led the Muslim army. Hadrat Ja'far also took part in this battle. Hadrat Zaid laid down his life for the cause of Islam in the battle.

After him Hadrat Ja'far commanded the Muslim army. He broke through the ranks of the enemy

"tayyar". So he became known as "Ja'far Tayyar" (Allah be pleased with him).

Hadrat Ja'far Tayyar (Allah be pleased with him) possessed many other qualities besides courage and chivalry. He was associated with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) ever since his childhood, and was fully acquainted with the spirit and implications of Islam. He strictly followed the commandments of Allah and the Holy Prophet throughout his life and acquired a very high and respectable position among the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Hadrat Abu Huraira says: "On several occasions I tied pebbles to my stomach to lessen the pangs of hunger. And, while in desperate hunger, I used to ask the meaning of some Qur'anic verses from well–to–do persons, (although I knew their meaning) in the hope that they would take me home and feed me. In helping the poor and needy I found Ja'far (Allah be pleased with him) better than others. He would take us home and put before us anything he had. Sometimes he served us with an empty bag of honey or butter and tore it open, so that we could satisfy our hunger by licking it."

This shows that Hadrat Ja'far (Allah be pleased with him) was very hospitable. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) used to call him 'Abul

Masakeen' (father of the needy). The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him once said.

"Ja'far! You resemble me in features as well as in habits."

That was why the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) regarded him as one of his fourteen trusted friends. Hadrat Ja'far's son 'Abdullah says:

"At times my uncle, Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) refused me something which I asked for. But when I demanded anything in the name of my father, Ja'far, he never refused.

HADRAT 'UBAIDA BIN AL–JARRAH

Aminul Ummah

(Allah be pleased with him)

Hadrat 'Ubaida bin Al–Jarrah (Allah be pleased with him) is one of those ten holy Companions who received the tidings during their lifetime that they are destined to go to Paradise. Another distinction of Hadrat 'Ubaida was the title of '*Amin–ul– Ummah*', i.e. 'Custodian of the Community' conferred upon him by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). An account of his life would inspire us to follow the trail set by him and serve the cause of Islam with same zeal and fervour to earn the pleasure of Allah and an eternal reward.

Before embracing Islam, Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida was one of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq's friends. When Siddiq–i–Akbar (Allah be pleased with him) embraced Islam, he invited all his friends to Islam. None of his intelligent and sensible friends lagged behind in acquiring the blessings of Islam. Such famous companions as Zubair and Talha (Allah be pleased with them) embraced Islam on the invitation and preaching of Siddiq–i–Akbar (Allah be

pleased with him). Also, persons of sound judgement like 'Abdul Rahman bin 'Auf, zealous warriors like Sa'd bin Waqqas, persons of intergrity like 'Othman bin 'Affan and Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with them) embraced Islam through his efforts.

Hadrat 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) ranks high in the merit list of first converts to Islam who endured the unbearable torments of the infidels of Makka. He went through all their barbarities and persecution and never did he waver. He had to leave his home, family, wealth and property. Twice he migrated to Abyssinia and made his third migration to Madina. There too the Muslims were not allowed to live in peace. The infidels of Makka challenged the Muslims in the battle of Badr. Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida took part in the battle with great zeal. This can be judged from the fact that Hadrat 'Ubaida was in the ranks of the Muslim army, while his father in the enemy forces. The father tried his best to make his son, Abu 'Ubaida, a target of his arrows, while the son avoided confrontation with his father. But when 'Ubaida saw that his father did not refrain from aiming at his own son, the love for Allah overcame the filial affection, and he killed him with one stroke of his sword. This

shows that, in matters of religion, all relations such as mother, father, sister, brother, and ties such as of race and nation are severed, and a devotee of Allah is cut off from every body and devotes himself to the service of Allah only. The Holy Quran says about such devotees of Islam: –

> "You will not find folks, who believe in Allah and the last Day, loving those who oppose Allah and his Messengers, even though they be their fathers or their sons or their brethren or their kin. As for such, He has written faith upon their hearts and has strenghtened them with a devotion to Him" (58 : 22).

The battle of Badr was followed by the battle of Uhud. In this battle Holy Prophet received an injury on the face, and two pieces of iron from the armour thrusted into the flesh of his face, Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) pulled out the splinters with his teeth, and in this process broke two of his teeth. But that devotee of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) did not think of his pain and extracted the iron pieces.

Besides the battles of Badr and Uhud, Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) stood by the Holy Prophet (peace with upon him) in all the other battles too. He always fought gallantly against

the enemy. In addition to taking part in all these battles, Abu 'Ubaida completed with success every assignment given to him by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) once despatched 'Umar bin al'As (Allah be pleased with him) with a body of troops on an expedition. On reaching there 'Umar bin al'As (Allah be pleased with him) asked for some reinforcements to be sent to him. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) sent two hundred warriors under the command of Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him).

The importance of this auxiliary force can be judged by the fact, that among others it included men like Abu Bakr Siddiq and 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with them).

With the arrival of the reinforcement a problem cropped up. In the presence of such eminent Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) who should command the forces? Hadrat 'Umar bin al'As (Allah be pleased with him) was no match to Hadrat Siddiq Akbar, Hadrat 'Umar Farooq and Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida, in eminence. 'Umar bin al 'As insisted that he should continue as th commander for strategic reasons. Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) agreed with him. This event shows the

loftiness of Abu 'Ubaida's character. He had gained so much in the company of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in terms of piety, virtue and character that after the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq and Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with them) entrusted him with missions of great responsibility. The invasion of Syria was an important issue during the period of the first two caliphs. Serious encounters had taken place with the Christians at Damascus, Makhal, Ladqia, Yarmouk and several other places. Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) commanded the Muslim armies very efficiently. A few events of the battle at Yarmouk are cited here.

Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) marched into the territory of the Roman emperor, Hercules, after defeating his armies and conquering several forts. The Roman Emperor was aghast, He warned all the Christian states about the looming danger. He raised a huge army and the Christians made a vow to drive the Muslims out of their land. Receiving the news Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) halted at Hamas and called a meeting of his subordinate officers. After delivering a forceful address, he held a council or war.

A veteran suggested: "We should go out to meet the enemy leaving the women folk and the children in the city. We should write at the same time to Hadrat Khalid bin Walid and Hadrat 'Umar bin al'As (Allah be pleased with them) to reach here as soon as possible from Damascus and Palestine." By that time the Muslims had occupied Hamas and its Christian inhabitants had agreed to pay Jizia (protection money) and remain faithful to the Muslims. But the Muslims and the Christians had no experience of one another. So, another Muslim veteran said:

"We should not leave our families at the mercy of Christians."

General Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) observed.

"Should then we get the city evacuated by the Christians as our first step."

Sharjil bin Hasana (Allah be pleased with him) rose and said:

"O our leader! It would be breach of faith and a violation of agreement in the eyes of Islamic law, and you cannot do that."

The custodian of the Muslim nation, Abu 'Ubaida *(Ameen ul Millat)*, could not imagine to go against the principles of Islam at any cost. He con-

ceded the point and returned the protection money received as Jizia to the Christians of the city with the remarks.

"Jizia was collected from you as a token money for your protection. Since we are not in a position to guarantee protection to you we have no right to keep the money with us."

The Christians of Hamas had never seen such a character and fairplay. They were moved to tears and prayed "May Allah bring you back soon!"

On learning the evacuation of Hamas by the Muslim occupants, Hercules was greatly encouraged. The Romans gathered a huge force in Yarmouk to rout the Muslims and remove the danger of Islam for ever. But there were men among the Romans who knew the metal of Muslims and their courage and fearlessness. They advised their leadership to avoid confrontation with the Muslim forces. Consequently a Roman named George was sent as a messenger to negotiate with the Muslims. As he came in close contact with the Muslims he was very much impressed with their honesty and character. He also met Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) and discussed religion with him. He could not resist the appeal and embraced Islam. Now he had no desire to return; but his stay was

likely to arouse suspicions in the Roman forces. Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida said: "Go back now; tommorrow when some persons from our side shall go in your army, you may come back with them."

Next day some persons from the Muslim army went to the Roman camp, but the terms of truce could not be agreed upon and the battle started. The enemy was several hundred thousand strong while the Muslims were thirty to thirty–two thousand only. However, the commander of the Muslim army planned his strategy with such skill that, by the grace of Allah, the enemy was completely routed. Seventy thousand of their troops lay dead. It proved a decisive blow and the Romans lost all the forts one by one.

Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) was not only a good military strategist but a diplomat too, who commanded great respect among the infidels of Makka. The treaty of Hudaibia between the Makkans and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), bore the name of Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) as witness.

In the ninth year after Hijra, some people from Najran presented themselves to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and requested him to send with them a learned and pious person to educate them in

Islam. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) deputed Abu 'Ubaida for the purpose and said:

"He is the custodian of Muslim nation I am sending him with you."

After the death of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), when the election of Caliph was under discussion, Hadrat Siddiq–e–Akbar (Allah be pleased with him) proposed Abu 'Ubaida's name for this office and said to the Muslims:

"Here is Abu 'Ubaida bin Al–Jarrah (Allah be pleased with him). He has been bestowed with the title of Amin–ul–Ummah. If you agree he is best suited for the job." Hadrat Abu 'Ubaidah stepped forward and took an oath of allegiance to Hadrat Siddiq–e–Akbar (Allah be pleased with him). After him all the Muhajirin and Ansar took oath of allegiance.

Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) was very much particular about the Islamic principle of equality. He faithfully obeyed Allah and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He knew no distinction between an officer and his subordinate. Once during a battle he camped at Makhal. The enemy sent a messenger to him to negotiate peace. When the messenger arrived in the Muslim camp he was amazed to see that every Muslim, high or low,

was imbued with the same spirit. He looked in every direction to locate the tent of the commander, which he expected to be a prominent one; but he could not. He was perplexed and enquired: "Who is your commander, please?" The men took him to Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him), who was sitting on the ground. The messenger was stunned by this humility and said: "Are you the chief, really?" Then he discussed with him some important matters and went away.

Many welfare projects started by Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) in Syria, were completed by Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida. When famine struck Arabia in 18 A.H. he sent four thousand camels loaded with grain from Syria. He was so keen in the propagation of Islam that he never forgot his duty. Thousands of Romans and Syrians embraced Islam impressed by his high character and excellent conduct.

Although Abu Ubaida was the Governor of Syria, he was so simple that he wore quite ordinary clothes and kept only one she–camel for personal conveyance. The camel too had no decorations and was stringed with an ordinary cord. Once Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) paid a visit to Syria. He came to see his governor and found

nothing with him except a sword, a shield, and a camel's saddle. Hadrat 'Umar said:

"What a pity, Abu 'Ubaida you should at least have provided yourself with some bare necessities of life."

Abu 'Ubaida replied: "Sir, what all I possess is more than enough for me."

Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) once sent to him four hundreds dinars and four thousand dirhams. Abu 'Ubaida accepted the money and distributed it among the troops. When Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) came to know of this, he said:

"All praise be to Allah! What sort of persons have been produced by Islam !"

Thus the 'Custodian of the Muslim nation' passed the whole of his life in obedience to Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Even in the last moments of his life he followed the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He was infected by plague at Jabia and breathed his last in the epidemic. He refused to leave the epidemic-ridden locality to save his life as the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) disapproved of running away from any place for fear of life.

HADRAT SAEED BIN ZAID

(Allah be pleased with him)

Hadrat Saeed (Allah be pleased with him) enjoys the rare distinction among the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that his father, Zaid, hated idolatory and its attendant evils even before the advent of Islam. He was so strong in his dislike for idol–worship that he refused to accept the meat offered to idols as sacrifice and said boldly, "I do not take the meat of animals sacrificed for your false gods." But, although he did not believe in idol–worship, he wondered which is the path that leads to one Allah. he travelled far and wide in search of the truth. He met the learned rabbis among the Jews. He visited the Christian priests and put before them his spiritual dilemma. They said, "You will find pure Tauhid (belief in one God) in 'Deen–e–Haneef, only". Zaid said, "what is Deen–e–Haneef."

They explained, "Deen–e–Haneef is the religion of Hadrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him)". They could not tell anything more about it. Zaid returned to Makka with learning just the name of Deen–e–Ibrahim but a great curiosity for it. People would see

him often sitting with his back to the wall of the Holy Ka'aba and saying: "By Allah, none among you, besides me, adheres to the religion of Ibrahim."

This pious man died with a burning desire in his heart to see Deen–e–Hanif in its complete and pure form. However, his virtuous son responded zealously to the call of Din–e–Ibrahim (Islam) in its pure and complete form, presented by Hadrat Muhammad (peace be upon him). For, to him, the call of **Tauhid** was not unfamiliar. His faithful wife also joined him in embracing Islam.

Those were the days when the pagans could not tolerate anybody embracing Islam, especially, when a person from their own family turned Muslim, the other members of the clan considered it a mark of personal shame before their friends and relatives. Hence the person who inflicted the most painful torture upon his Muslim relation was often his non–believer father, brother, or some other close relative.

The wife of Hadrat Saeed (Allah be pleased with him), Fatimah, was the sister of Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him). The sister got the treasure of Islam through her husband; but the brother embraced Islam through his sister!

It is a heart–rending incident of history. The infidels of Makka pressed Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be

pleased with him) to kill the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Hadrat 'Umar, (Allah be pleased with him) one day, took his sword and went out to find the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). On the way he met a friend who said, "Where are you going 'Umar?"

"I am going to kill Muhammad", said 'Umar.

"Well, look to your own house first. Go and see your own sister and her husband. They have embraced Islam," taunted the friend.

These words added fuel to his rage. Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) went to his brother-in-law's house in a fit of frenzy. From outside the house he heard the voices reciting the verses of Holy Quran. This enraged him all the more. He entered the house and began to beat his brother-in-law, Hadrat Saeed (Allah be pleased with him), mercilessly. When Fatimah (Allah be pleased with her) saw her brother's cruelty and her husband's perseverence, she came forward to intercede. Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) became more enraged and he beat his sister even more. But he could not make either of them give up the path of Islam. The sister said very boldly:

"O 'Umar! You may take our lives but you cannot take Islam out of our hearts. If you do not

follow the truth, your will be the loser in this world and in the hereafter."

Seeing the firm attitude of his sister and borther–in–law, 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) stood aghast. The sister's words moved his heart. He grew calm, and said, "Then let me listen to what you were reading." Hadrat Saeed (Allah be pleased with him) recited some verses from the Holy Qur'an. The time had come. Allah's blessings were with him. So when he pondered over the meaning of those verses, he was altogether changed. He had come to slay his sister and her husband, but when he got up to depart, the truth of Islam had fully dawned upon him. He had no way out but to go to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and embrace Islam. Thus by the will of Allah, Hadrat Saeed (Allah be pleased with him) became an instrument to lead Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) to embrace Islam.

From the books on the life–history of Hadrat Saeed (Allah be pleased with him), we come to know that he never did any thing throughout his life against the teaching of Allah and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). A line by a historian depicts a very true picture of him. It says: "Hadrat Saeed (Allah be pleased with him) always covered the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) keeping himself

ahead and in front of him in the battle and always stood behind him in prayers." he took part in a number of battles, even after the death of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), for the sake of Islam, and fought very bravely.

He was offered the office of a Governor on account of his courage and administrative abilities, but he did not accept it.

Once he was appointed Governor of Damascus without his consent. He wrote to Hadrat Abu 'Ubaidah (Allah be pleased with him), "I am unable to offer such a sacrifice; you will perform Jehad while I will be deprived of it. Please send someone else to replace me as soon as you receive this letter. I am coming to you soon." Later, he fought as an ordinary soldier in all the battles which were waged for the cause of Islam. He passed the rest of his life in perfect peace. Allah had favoured him with a heart full of patience and resignation. He did not ever incline towards the mundane pleasures of life. He disliked taking an oath. Once he had to attend a court of law in connection with a case of his own. The Qadi asked him to speak on oath. He withdrew his case and abandoned his claim. His submission to faith, his fear of Allah, and his services for the cause of Islam, earned him the glad tidings from the Holy

Prophet (peace be upon him) during his lifetime that he would enter the Eternal Gardens in the life hereinafter. He expired at the age of seventy years and met his Creator with the distinction of having striven continuously to seek His pleasure.

HADRAT TUFAIL BIN 'AMAR DOOSI

(Allah be pleased with him)

Wicked people adopt many ways to suppress the truth. One of their methods is to spread false rumors against the person who calls to the truth. They try to stop the people from coming into contact with such person and let them not listen to him.

Those who know not the truth fall an easy prey to such false prapaganda and keep themselves away from such person. But at the same time it is also a fact that as and when people come to know the truth and it appeals to their good sense, they cannot remain a silent spectator and follow the truth with spirit and fervour. The case of Hadrat Tufail Doosi (Allah be pleased with him) is an illuminating example of the fact stated above.

Hadrat Tufail bin 'Amar Doosi (Allah be pleased with him) belonged to a prosperous tribe of Yemen called Doos and was the chief of his tribe. By profession he was a merchant. He often visited Makka in connection with his business. He was a poet also and had very good relations with the elite of Makka.

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) invited the Makkans to follow the path of truth and embrace Islam, Tufail bin 'Umar Doosi happened to be present in Makka. His friends extended to him hospitality and entertainment as usual, but they gave him a warning also. They said: "Beware of the person called Muhammad. Do not listen to him, otherwise you will fall prey to him. His discourse is so charming that anyone who listens to him follows him blindly. He separates the brother from his brother, wife from her husband, and the son from his father. He has played havoc in our city and has ruined our peace and tranquility. You are our guest, so we have given you a piece of advice; otherwise you are intelligent enough to know what is good or bad."

The friends misled Tufail Doosi (Allah be pleased with him) in such a manner that he said to himself, "They are my well-wishers. Whatever they say must be true. Why should I meet that man Muhammad!" Then he plugged both of his ears with pads of cotton so that he could not hear the voice of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). But, he was destined by Allah to be blessed with Islam and all these devices proved futile.

One day as he passed by the Ka'aba he saw the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saying his

prayers. The recitation of Qur'anic verses came to his ears. He stopped to listen to it as the charm of the verses attracted him. He said to himself, "What a fool I am! I am myself a good poet and can judge very well the standard and quality of a piece of literature, why shouldn't I listen and talk to him. If it is worth appreciation I must acknowledge it with open heart; if it is something worthless then I will certainly not fall a prey to him."

Hadrat Tufail (Allah be pleased with him) stopped near the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and listened attentively to the Qura'nic verses recited by him. After the prayers when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) proceeded towards his house, Tufail (Allah be pleased with him) followed him and met him at his residence. He told him whatever the Makkans had said about him adding, "I plugged my ears with cotton pads so that I could not hear the Holy Qur'an. The pagans deceived me. Kindly recite some more verses from the Holy Book."

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) at first told him about Islam and its teachings and then recited some verses from the Qur'an. When Tufail bin 'Amar Doosi (Allah be pleased with him) heard the Holy verses, he was struck with awe. Suddenly

he exclaimed, "By Allah! My ears never heard any verses better than this before; nor have I ever known a religion more attractive than Islam. I accept with all my heart the teachings and commandments of the true religion of Allah."

After embracing Islam, Hadrat Tufail bin 'Amar Doosi (Allah be pleased with him) returned to Yemen. He had learnt the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He, therefore, started propagating Islam in his country. In the first instance he invited his own father towards Islam. He accepted the faith. Then he preached to his wife. She too accepted Islam. Thus, he invited his whole family to Islam all of whom accepted it. After that all the members of his family began to work for Islam. But they gained little success in their mission. Hence he again went to Makka. He met the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and requested him to pray to Allah for guiding the people of Yemen to the right path. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed and then said to Tufail (Allah be pleased with him) "Invite the people to Islam politely and affectionately." The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) gave this advice, because Tufail (Allah be pleased with him) was a wealthy person of his clan and such persons develop arrogant manners.

Tufail bin 'Amar Doosi (Allah be pleased with him) returned home with the new instructions from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He started preaching Islam to the individuals he found receptive and intelligent and within a short period most of the people of his tribe turned Muslims.

Hadrat Tufail preached Islam in his own land and visited Makka off and on to see the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). In Makka he heard about the atrocities committed on the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his followers. He saw that the torments and cruelties on the Muslims were becoming unbearable. He was the owner of a strong fort in Yemen. His entire family had accepted Islam. So he invited the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to migrate to Yemen. He gave him every guarantee for his safety and peace of mind. But the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) waited for a sign from Allah. He did not agree to migrate and said, "Please go to your tribe and try to bring the rest of the people into the fold of Islam."

Hadrat Tufail (Allah be pleased with him) returned to his country and engaged himself in preaching Islam. By his influence a great number of people of Yemen embraced Islam. When he heard after some time that the Holy Prophet (peace be

upon him) had migrated to Madina, Hadrat Tufail also left for Madina with some people of his clan. They heard at Madina that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was out on an expedition to Khyber. So all of them proceeded to Khyber. At Khyber the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) posted young men of that party at strategic positions. These brave young men proved their worth. After the conquest of Khyber they returned to Madina in the company of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and stayed there. Hadrat Tufail engaged himself in the service of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and attained full knowledge of Islam. He was very eager to die as martyr. After the death of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and during the caliphate of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (Allah be pleased with him), his long–felt desire was fulfilled. He took part in the battle of Yamama and laid down his life to uphold the **Kalima** which he had recited while embracing Islam. May Allah be pleased with him.

HADRAT BILAL

(Allah be pleased with him)

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

Inna Akramakum 'Indallahe Atqa–kum
(To Allah the most respectable is he who is the most pious).

Generally only that person is regarded as noble and great who is highly educated, who enjoys distinction of race and colour, who is the richest in goods and property, holds the highest office, or possesses some authority, that is, he has the power to command the weak according to his own will, and can deal with his opponents severely. But, in Islam, education, wealth, family, race, colour, office and authority are not the proof of nobility and greatness. Islam says that the greatest and the noblest person is he who is the most pious. By piety we mean that a person should be afraid of disobeying Allah, should keep away from evils merely for the sake of seeking the favour of Allah, and should do what is good. This claim of Islam is not merely theoretical, it is also very

practical. Islam presented a society in which great was he who was a model of piety in words and in deeds. There were persons who could neither read nor write, nor were they superior in race or clan; nor were they wealthy or held any high office; they did not even possess any official authority, but they were pious. Because of their piety they were elevated to very high positions in Islam.

Hadrat Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him) is a glorious example of the above mentioned criterion for respect, honour and elevation to high positions in Islamic society. For those who have full faith in Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and who want to build an Islamic society to introduce the whole world to true Islam, the story of Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) contains several lessons. Also, there is light for those people who are concerned with the welfare of humanity, even to a small degree.

Hadrat Bilal was jet black in complexion. He was a negro by birth. He had no wealth, no office and no authority. He was only a slave. A slave did not have any position in the society. He could be sold like vegetables. An animal could run away and thus save his life but a slave could not even dare to run away; he was sure to be caught again and sent back to his

master. Or he could be sold again and he had to do any work which his master ordered him to do.

Hadrat Bilal was passing his life as a slave when the streets of Makka echoed with the message of **Tauhid** (belief in One Allah). The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) gave His call to liberate humanity from all sorts of slavery. He exhorted:

> "Slavery is to Allah only. He has created us; He has favoured us with food to eat; He has provided us with all the necessities of life. Hence our real Master is Allah. All that conforms with the will of Allah is right., If our desires are subject to Allah's commandments, they are worth implemenation, otherwise not. If our family customs and traditions are governed by the Will of Allah, they are agreeable, otherwise they are worthless. If the orders of a human being to his fellow human beings are in conformity with the dictates of Allah, they are worth submission, otherwise not."

This sermon of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was so clear, simple and natural that everybody, young and old, understood it fully well. The black and the white, poor and rich, supporters and non–believers, the slave and the master—all understood it clearly. But who dared adopt it as

creed? The persons who had the spark of humanity in them heard the call of the oneness of God, their hearts were inspired by faith in Islam and they cried out:

> "Muhammad (peace be upon him) speaks the truth, and whatever he says is the message of Allah."

But those persons who were proud of themselves, who had the mentality of capitalists, whose hands were stained with the blood of the weak, and who were drunk with the power of authority over their people, could not tolerate this voice. They realised that in case a new society was created, they could no longer retain the privilege of ruling over the others. They tried with all the means at their command—wealth, family pressure, power and authority— to crush that voice. If anybody came forward to listen to that voice he was threatened, beaten, imprisoned, kept hungry, or persuaded to keep himself away from the call of truth. The father disuaded his son, the brother restrained his brother, the uncle forbade his nephew, the master coerced his slave — in short the infidels stopped the believing persons from listening to what the Holy Prophet said. Ordinarily, a father could be sympathetic towards his son, a brother could sympathise with his

brother, and uncle could be kind to his nephew, but a master could not be sympathetic to his slave. His only consideration was that his slave did not dare disobey him. Hence the slaves were specially the target of horrifying tortures and torment.

Hadrat Bilal was the slave of the most cruel person of Makka, Umayya bin Khalaf. The call for belief in one Allah and the teachings of the Holy Prophet had such a deep effect onHadrat Bilal that he could not restrain himself for even a moment and he at once cried out:

اَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ

(Ash hado an La Ilaha Illal-laho wa–ash hado anna Muhammaddar Rasool ullah) **Meaning:**

I stand witness to the fact that there is no God except Allah an I stand witness that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the Prophet of Allah.

How could Umayya bin Khalaf tolerate that his slave should bow to one God. Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) had to pay heavily for it. Umayya bin Khalaf inflicted so much torment and torture upon him that its details make us shudder even today. He would lay Bilal on the burning sand of the Arabian desert, or on hot bed of burning coal. He

would tie a rope round his neck and would hand over the end of it to ruffians of the city to drag him all around. Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) uttered the words 'Ahad! Ahad' even in that unbearable torture to the utter disgust of his master, who now laid him down on burning sand, face downwards, and put a heavy stone upon his back. At about noon when Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) fainted, the master said, "Bilal! It is still time that you leave Allah of Muhammad (peace be upon him)!"

Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) unmindful of the torments, still uttered the words 'Ahad, Ahad', (Allah is one). His master invented some more heinous torments. He would sometimes pack him in a cow's skin, sometimes he would put on his person an iron armour and would lay him down in severe heat of the sun, and not satisfied even with that he would beat him severely and force him to admit that **Laat** and **Uzza** were his gods.

But the devotee of Allah could say nothing but 'Ahad! Ahad.' The injuries inflicted upon his person could even melt the stones; and even the non-believers of Makka felt sympathy for him and said, "Bilal! if you only repeat the words we say, we will press your master to stop torturing you." But Bilal said, "My tongue is unable to repeat those words."

As a result the sympathisers were tired and left him alone; but neither was Umayya tired of tormenting Bilal, nor Bilal of suffering the torments.

When Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) bore the brunt of the tortures and torments with courage and perseverence and proved his metal, Allah, the Almighty, took him out of the great ordeal. Hadrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) was a very kind-hearted person of Makka. Though wealthy, he did not possess the mentality of a capitalist. He had already embraced Islam. He was passing by when he heard the call; "Ahad! Ahad!" He saw the painful condition of Bilal and was grieved, and purchased him from his master, after paying a heavy price and set him free. When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) came to know about it, he said.

"O! Abu Bakar! Let me share this sacred deal with you."

Hadrat Abu Bakr said, "O Prophet of Allah, I have already set him free."

But freedom from slavery did not save Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) from tortures and torments. In his individual capacity he was free from the brutalities of Umayya bin Khalaf; but as member of the community of Islam he was still the target

of the persecutors of Makka. However, he saved himself of all torments and tortures when the Muslims were permitted by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to migrate to Madina, and the devotees of Islam left their houses, their belongings and their place of birth, for the sake of Allah, and migrated to Madina.

In Madina, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him joined Hadrat Bilal and Hadrat Abu Ravaha bin Abdullah in bonds of brotherhood. They were so deeply attached to each other that they looked more than real brothers. During the Caliphate of Hadrat Umar Farooq when Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) was proceeding on an expedition to Syria some one asked him, "Who will receive your stipend in your absence."

Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) said, "Abu Ravaha will do it. The ties of brotherhood established between us by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) will never break."

In Madina, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) constructed the Holy Mosque. Hadrat Bilal was entrusted with the duty of announcing the *adhan* five times a day. And, thus, the tongue which had refused to move for uttering words of respect to the idols, came into action now. Allah had been

bountiful in giving Bilal a voice very loud and melodious. Persons, intoxicated with the love of Islam, were enchanted on hearing it. Men left their business, women came out of their houses, and the children stopped playing, to gather in the mosque, and then all of them, young or old, stood shoulder to shoulder to bow before Allah.

Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) was not only a *Muadhdhin* for the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), he was also his confidant. He was always with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He accompanied the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to every place and walked a few paces ahead of him with a spear in his hand. When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) entered the **Ka'aba** after the conquest of Makka Hadrat Bilal had the honour of accompanying him. Hadrat Bilal looked to the management of the Holy Prophet's (peace be upon him) household affairs. He was with him in all the military campaigns. He killed the greatest enemy of Islam, Umayya bin Khalaf, in the battle of Badr. He followed the footsteps of the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) throughout his life. In course of time he was elevated to a position of great esteem in the society and the high and respectable families wished him to marry in their families. Thus

he married in the families of Bani Zahra and Hadrat Abu Darda (Allah be pleased with him). The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) himself performed his Nikah ceremony with the daughter of Hadrat Abu Bukair. All of them were proud of their relationship with Bilal (allah be pleased with him) who was a negro by birth and colour, a slave by position and a poor man by worldly standards.

Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) felt great pleasure in devoting himself to Allah and in submission to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) also had a great regard for him. He would not refuse him any favour. Once, during a journey, night fell. Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) liked that place. He said, "It is good if the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) allows us to camp here." The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "I am afraid a sound sleep may not let you get up in the small hours of the night."

Hadrat Bilal had full confidence in himself for getting up any time in the night. He took the responsibility of awakening all the fellow–travellers. As a precautionary measure he made up his mind to keep himself awake the whole night and engaged himself in prayers. But incidently he fell asleep. He awoke

when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) awakened him.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Well Bilal! What about your duty?"

He said, "O Prophet of Allah! I was never negligent before."

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "No doubt, Allah takes possession of your souls whenever He Wills, and returns them to you according to His Will. Get up now, and call for prayers, so that people may come for prayers."

This shows the position of Hadrat Bilal in the eyes of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Now something about his relationship with the Caliphs after the demise of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

The first Caliph, Hadrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him), never kept Hadrat Bilal away from himself. One day Hadrat Bilal said to him, "I have heard the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) say that the best work for a good Muslim is to go for **Jehad** in the way of Allah. So I wish that I should engage myself in this sacred work till the end of my life. I request that I may be allowed to go on some expedition."

Hadrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) said, "O Bilal! in the name of Allah and my right over you, do not leave me alone in this old age." When Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) heard these affectionate words he did not insist.

During the reign of Hadrat Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him), Hadrat Bilal again sought permission to go for **Jehad.** He also wanted to stop Bilal but did not succeed in persuading him to stay in Madina. So Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) joined the expedition to Syria. Hadrat Umar (Allah be pleased with him) used to say, "Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) was our leader, and he has set our leader Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) free.

Once the second caliph, Hadrat Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him), was sitting with some friends. In the course of their talk they decided that every one present should express his choicest desire. So one of them said, "I wish Allah may bestow upon me gold worth the mountain of Uhud in weight, so that I may spend it all in the name of Allah to seek His pleasure." Another person said, "My desire is that Allah may favour me with a number of slave girls, so that I may set them free to seek His pleasure." Some other person desired for martyrdom to win an abode in the Eternal Gardens;

another person wished to go on **Jehad** and still another person desired to perform a faultless Hajj. But, when it was the turn of Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him), he said, "May Allah fill this house with saints like Bilal, Salman Farsi, Khubab and Suhaib (Allah be pleased with them) and I may sit amongst them." This shows what high esteem Hadrat Bilal enjoyed in Hadrat 'Umar's (allah be pleased with them) eyes.

All of Hadrat Bilal's counsels which he offered to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) or to the First Caliph, or the Second Caliph, were accepted. On the occasion of the conquest of Syria, the whole army, officers or troops, were served the same food on the recommendation of Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with them). He spoke for the marriage of a poor devotee of Islam to the member of a very high Madinite family and the request was accepted. He was never tired of spreading the teachings of Islam. He used to say, "I am only a negro, who was till lately an ordinary slave. Oh my people! put faith in Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), then take part in Jehad and then perform a faultless Hajj."

Before dis death, he saw the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in his dream, saying, "O Bilal!

How long this uninteresting life! Has not the time come that we meet again?" When he got up, he was in a highly excited state of mind. He was living permanently at that time in a town, Kholan, in Syria. He left the town and came to Madina. He met the relations and companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and returned home. He died in Damascus and was buried there. May Allah shower his choicest blessings upon him for his piety and nobility of character. And, may Allah bless all those who love and follow the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) as did the devoted Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

HADRAT ZAID BIN HARITH

(Allah be pleased with him)

A slave who embraced Islam and became great among the greatest.

Harith, father of Zaid, hailed from Yemen. Hadrat Zaid (Allah be pleased with him) was also born in Yemen. He was still a lad when his mother undertook a journey to her parents' hometown with him. On the way they were waylaid by some dacoits who snatched the lad away from her and sold him as a slave.

The child was destined to be a great man so much so that he was to be one of the dearest to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). As destined by Allah Zaid was bought and brought up by Hakim bin Hizam, the nephew of Hadrat Khadija, the Mother of the Faithful. He presented the child to his aunt. Hadrat Khadijah gave him away to her husband, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

Ignorant of the Will of Allah, man is by nature very impatient. On the one hand the child was blessed with the bondage to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) – a bondage which was to be

envied later even by the men commanding highest positions in the Islamic society. On the other hand the parents had lost their peace of mind on account of the separation of their child. The poor souls did not know what was in store for him. They mourned their son day and night and searched for him every where. Many years passed and the poor parents could not get any clue of their lost child.

Once a group of people from Yemen came to Makka to perform Hajj and happened to see and recognise him. Going back to Yemen they conveyed the happy news to the poor father. He at once started for Makka along with his brother taking some presents with him. They came to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and after paying homage said, "O noble son of Abdullah! O noble grand son of Abdul Muttalib! You are the son of the noblest man of your community. You belong to the sacred City of Ka'aba, you are the defender of Ka'aba, you help persons in distress and feed the prisoners. We have come to you with the prayer that you kindly set your slave free, who is our son. We are ready to pay whatever ransom you ask for."

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Whom do you speak about?"

"We are talking about Zaid," was the reply.

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) heard the name of Zaid, he paused for a while. He had brought up Zaid as if he was his own son and loved him to the core of his heart. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Harith, "Do you require anything else?" Harith said, "No."

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Well! call for Zaid and leave it to him. If he chooses you, he will be yours. If he prefers me then by Allah, I am not a person who does not like him who likes me."

Harith, father of Zaid, accepted this condition. He thought that Zaid was only a slave and in view of the miserable condition of the slaves throughout the world in those days his son must also be suffering the ordeals of slavery. Little did he know that Zaid was in the service of that blessed person who uplifted the slaves to a position above the masters and whose mission was to elevate the salves to the highest standards of humanity.

Zaid was called in. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him, "Do you recognise them?" Zaid said, "yes Sir, this is my father, and there is my uncle." The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) told him the whole story and said, "Do you know who am I? You know the way in which you have lived with

me. It is now upto you. You may either choose me if you so desire, or you may go with your father and uncle."

Hadrat Zaid was fully conscious of the blessing which he enjoyed in the company of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and he also knew the beneficial effects of the training which he had received from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He therefore, said, unhesitatingly, "Only you are my parent."

Zaid's father and uncle were wonderstruck at his words and said, "Alas! son, you prefer slavery to freedom and reunion with your father and uncle and the family!" He said, "Yes. I have seen such traits in his Holy personage that I do not regard anybody greater than him."

Hadrat Zaid's conversation with his father enhanced the love of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) for him. He took him to Ka'aba and proclaimed, "From today Zaid is my son. I will be his trustee and he will be my ward." This announcement made Harith and his brother very happy and they left the son with great pleasure in the service of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and departed cheerfully.

A few days later when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was entrusted by Allah with the mis-

sion of Islam and he presented it to the people, Zaid embraced Islam at once along with Hadrat Khadijah, Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with them).

When the uncle of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), Hadrat Hamza, embraced Islam, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) tied Hamza and Zaid in bonds of brotherhood. With the blessings of Islam Zaid came so near to Hadrat Hamza that whenever Hadrat Hamza went away he confided every thing to Zaid only. Not only this, Zaid's stature rose still higher. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) married his governess Umm–i–Aimen and his cousion Zainab to Zaid. Regarding Umm–i–Aimen the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) once said, "If anybody wants to marry the most blessed woman he may marry her". Zaid could not affored to miss such an opportunity. He at once offered himself although Umm–i–Aimen was much older in age than Zaid.

When Hadrat Zaid migrated to Madina, he was declared as a brother of Hadrat Usaid bin Jafar Ansari (allah be pleased with him) who was a dignitary of Madina. Imagine the height to which a slave is elevated when he comes under the shelter of Islam. Hadrat Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her)

says that when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) sent any military expedition somewhere which included Zaid he was invariably nominated as the leader of that expedition. He was thus nominated to command the army nine times and very senior Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), like Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat 'Umar Farooq, (Allah be pleased with them) served under his command. The Holy Prophet's care and attention had developed in him such qualities and character that none else enjoyed more esteem than Zaid in the eyes of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). In archery even the famous Companions of the Holy Prophet (peae be upon him) could not excel Zaid. As for his valour and courage he never retreated even a foot in any fight for the cause of Islam. Whenever the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) went outside Madina, he nominated Zaid as his deputy. Zaid on his part discharged the responsibilities so well that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was entirely satisfied with his performance.

The Battle of Mauta was one of the most significant battles fought in the life–time of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). The Muslim army in this war included several great Companions such as

Hadrat Abu Bakr. Hadrat 'Umar Farooq and Hadrat Ja'afar Tayyar (Allah be pleased with them) and many others but the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) nominated Zaid as its Commander. When Zaid laid his life in the fight, the Holy Prophet's eyes were filled with tears out of love for Zaid and he appointed Usama, son of Zaid, as commander of the re–organised army.

The fact is that since Zaid had made the mission of his life to seek the pleasure of Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), his position was elevated by Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

After the death of the Holy Prophet, (peace be upon him) Hadrat Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her) said, "If Zaid were to be alive, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) would have nominated him as his successor."

May Allah have mercy upon these great Companions and enable us to follow in their footsteps. It is a fact that the lives of such Companions are the models for us to follow after the life of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

3. HADRAT SALMAN FARSI

(Allah be pleased with him)

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was once sitting with his followers in his Mosque. A stranger entered the mosque and coming over to the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) said, "I understand that you are a holy and pious person. Some of your followers are homeless and destitute. I have some alms for them. I think none else deserves better than your people; kindly accept these alms." The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) looked at him and asked him to give the alms to his followers. He then said to his followers to eat, but he himself did not eat anything from it. The stranger took notice of it and went away. Next day again he returned with some more articles of food and presenting them he said, "You did not accept the charity yesterday, kindly accept this as a gift from me".

The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) accepted the gift cheerfully; he took some of it himself and distributed the rest amongst the others. The stranger, in the meantime, had been trying to catch a glimpse of the Holy Prophet's (peace be on him) shoulders. May it be a chance or else that the cloth from the

shoulders of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) fell down and exposed an embossed mark equal in size to a rupee between his shoulders. The stranger stooped down and kissed the mark in reverence. The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) asked him to come forward. When he sat in front of him, he called for his followers and Companions and then asked the stranger to introduce himself to all present over there. The stranger narrated his story thus:

"O pious people! My name is Moaaba. I come from a village known as Jee near Isphahan, a famous city of Iran. My father was a big landlord. He was very fond of farming and carried on his favourite pursuit on a large scale. He loved me so much that he used to adorn me like girls and never allowed me to go outside the house. He was a follower of Zoroastra and worshipped the fire. He would teach me how to worship the fire and follow the doctrines of Zoroastrian religion. Being a very obedient son I also listened to my father very intently and would worship the fire with great devotion. From the very childhood I was considered one of those sacred priests who never allowed the holy fire to be extinguished for a single moment.

"One day my father was busy in repairing our house and as such he could not go out for his usual

round of the fields. I was quite grown up then and often went out of the house alone. So I was sent to look after the crops. On the way I saw a church where some Christians had gathered to say their prayers. I stopped over there and looked on. The manner in which the Christians were offering their devotions appealed me very much. I felt that their religion was better than that of ours. I then asked those Christians as to where the centre of their religion was. They told me that it was in Syria. As it was getting near evening, I came back home after noting the address of their Centre. My father enquired from me why I had been so late and that where had I been till then. I said, "on my way home I saw some people offering prayers in a church. Their manner of worship appealed me so much that I remained there till sunset." My father told me that their religion was not better than Zoroastrian. I insisted that their religion was far better than ours.

"My reply alarmed my father lest I should change my religion. So he forbade me to go out of the house. But I used to visit the church secretly. When my father came to know of it he was much annoyed and confined me within the house. While in confinement my restlessness increased and I sent word to the

Christians that they should inform me if any caravan was to leave for Syria.

"By the grace of Allah, soon after some traders happened to pass through our village. They were going to Syria. As soon as I heard the news I managed somehow to get myself out from the confinement and joined the caravan and reached Syria.

"I made enquiries from the people there about the grand priest. They gave me the address where I met him and told my story. I changed my religion. After conversion I began to remain in attendance on the grand priest. While in his company it was revealed to me that he was a very bad man. He exhorted others to do good deeds but he never practised what he preached. He collected charity from the people for the poor and the needy persons and usurped all of it for his personal use. Whatever he could save, he kept it under lock and key. Thus he soon got seven pails filled with gold and silver. Seeing his greed I was disgusted. Many a time I thought of telling the people all about it. But I could not dare to do so because of the personality and the influence of the grand priest. When he died I disclosed his secret. The people searched his house and recovered the pails filled with wealth. In retaliation the Christians hanged his dead body and stoned it.

"After his death another clergyman was appointed in his place. He was really a pious man. He used to worship day and night. I developed deep attachment with him. I told him my story and began to serve him. He was also pleased with me and confided in me. When he was about to die I told him that I had been with him for so long and he had always been very kind to me. Now that he was preparing for his last journey I begged for his advice as to what I should do and to whom should I go after him. He said that he was not aware of any Christian who followed the teachings of the holy Christ in its true spirit. The Christians had modified the teachings of Christ. They had abandoned the principles which they found inconvenient to observe. He however pointed out a person in Mosul who had the real knowledge of the teachings of Christ, and advised me to see him.

"After the death of that kind clergyman I reached Mosul, searched for the clergyman about whom I was told, and narrated the whole story to him. He was kind enough to accommodate me. He too was really a pious man. I learned much from him. Alas! after a few days he also passed away. Before his death he gave me, on my request, the address of another priest of Naseebain. I then went to that clergyman of

Naseebain, and found him to be the most pious of all other clergymen, but death soon overtook him also. I then went according to his advice to the Grand Bishop of Amooria. When he was also about to die I said to him, "I have been following every person about whom I thought that he could be my guide, but alas I have not been able to reach the destination. According to a poet, I go for a little while with every passer–by taking him as my guide; but I actually do not recognise my real guide."

"He said, 'O son! Should I tell you that there is none in this world who now followed the path of righteousness? How can one know the true religion when its very sources (The old and New Testament) have been polluted. But the time is approaching when the Prophet about whom you have read in the holy Bible is about to appear. That Prophet will rise from the deserts of Arabia and he will revive the religion of Ibrahim. He will be there in the land of date palms. You will recognize him by the fact that he will accept only gifts and not take charity. There will be an embossed mark equal in size of a rupee between his both shoulders on his back I, therefore, advise you to go to him. You will find peace and blessing with him only.'

"After the death of the Grand Bishop, I remained stationed there. Whenever a caravan arrived there I enquired about their destination. Fortunately some traders from Arabia came there and I also joined them. These Arabs, however, deceived me. They enslaved me and sold me to a Jew. That Jew, in his turn, sold me to his cousin and he took me to Madina. When I caught sight of the cluster of the date palms my excitement knew no bounds and I began to make enquiries about the new Prophet. But no one could tell anything.

"One day I was working in the garden of my master. I had climbed up a date tree and was engaged in pruning it. My master was sitting beneath. Some one came there and referring to a tribe he said, "curse befall the people of that tribe. All of them have gathered round a person who has come from Makka. They call him the Prophet."

"As soon as I heard him say so my legs began to tremble and my body shook with emotion. Had I not taken hold of myself and climbed down the tree I would surely have fallen on the ground. I was so excited that I could not control myself and without caring for the consequences I asked the stranger what he was saying. On hearing this, my master slapped me on my face and rebuked me saying, 'how

does it concern you; mind your own job.' I kept quiet, but I was uneasy at heart.

"I had some eatables which I brought to you yesterday and offered to you as charity. You did not accept the charity for yourself and distributed it among your Companions. One of the predictions of the grand Bishop of Amooria had come true. I could not sleep throughout the night yesterday. As soon as I got the chance again I brought some more food to you today as a gift which you accepted. You yourself took something from it and gave the rest to others also. The second prediction of the Bishop had also proved to be true. Then I wanted to verify the mark between your shoulders which I did just now as you saw. I am convinced that you are the Prophet I was told about. Thank God I attained my desire. The fact is that he who seeks, does find."

This long tale which was a true story was applauded by everybody who heard it. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was also pleased. This true story strengthened the conviction of the Muslims. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) named this seeker of truth as Salman and now Moaaba became Hadrat Salman (Allah be pleased with him).

The Holy Prohet (peace be upon him) was very anxious about the bondage of Hadrat Salman (Allah be pleased with him). He said, "Pay off your ransom to your master and secure freedom." Salman mentioned this to his master, a Jew. The matter was settled for three hundred date trees and forty *auqias* (Arab weight for gold and silver) of gold. How could a slave manage to pay such a large ransom! And what a slave! A homeless wanderer who could not stay at one place permanently. He kept on changing places now and then. They Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), a blessing for all, appealed to Muslims to help their Muslim brother. The Muslims who were the pioneers of the Islamic Movement for times to come represented in their character true spirit of brotherhood and deep love and affection for their fellow Muslims. They could not tolerate the slavery of any Muslim and could not bear to see any Muslim in distress. Thus all of them contributed the datepalms one, two or four each. They quickly collected three hundred trees. The Holy Prophet accompanied by all the Muslims went to the Jew's garden, planted the trees, and dressed the earth. One of the conditions of the Jew was thus fulfilled. The other condition was to provide the required quantity of gold. When Allah wills to save His slave then there is no hurdle.

The same day some gold was siezed in a battle. This was nearly equal in weight to a hen's egg. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) gave away all that gold to Salman. It was found to weigh forty *auqiyas* —as if Allah had sent that gold only for Salman.

Salman (Allah be pleased with him) thus paid the ransom and got himself freed of the slavery of the Jew and came straight to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and passed the rest of his life with him. On his arrival amongst the Muslims a very interesting controversy started. The question was whether Salman was a Muhajir or an Ansar? Both groups advanced arguments in favour of their claim in order to include Salman among themselves. The Muhajirs said that Salman left his home and hearth, parents and his country in search of truth. He wandered from country to country until Allah made him successful in achieving his goal. So he was a Muhajir in the true sense. The Ansars claimed that Salman had settled in Madina before embracing Islam and he adopted Islam during his stay in Madina. So he was an Ansari. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) listened to this controversy with great interest and offered thanks to Allah for the feelings of brother–hood amongst the Muslims. He said, "Salman is one of the members of my

family," He then tied him to Abu Durda, a renowned Companion, in fraternal bond. When Hadrat Salman (Allah be pleased with him) embraced Islam the battles of Badr and Uhud had already been over and so he had had no chance to participate in them. But he fought in all the rest of the battles alongwith other Muslims with great valour. On many occasion his expert advice on the strategy and planning of war led the Muslims to victory.

After his conversion to Islam, Hadrat Salman (Allah be pleased with him) had the chance to take part for the first time in the battle of Trench. In this war the whole of Arabia had made a concerted onslaught on Madina with a huge army in order to crush the new Islamic movement. In Madina there was neither a fortress nor any defence wall round the city as was usual those days. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) called a meeting of all the Muslims for consultation. Hadrat Salman had seen the wars fought in Iran and was well aware of many military tactics. He said, "It is not safe to face this huge army in the open field. We should protect the city of Madina by digging deep trenches around it."

This strategy was favoured by all and adopted. The Arabs were unaware of this tactic. Seeing the

trenches the invaders were perplexed and could not think of any way to overcome it. They besieged the city for a few days and then retreated unsuccessful. Thus Allah saved Islam and elevated the position of a newly converted Muslim, Salman Farsi, in the eyes of the rest of the Muslims.

The revolutionary movement of Islam benefited from the counsels of Salman in each and every battle fought for the cause of Islam. During the Caliphates of Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with them) when the Arabs invaded Iran, both the Caliphs availed of his counsels. He not only gave advice but also accompanied the holy warriors to all the fronts where his presence was needed. Before making an attack Salman used to present to the enemy the doctrines of Islam in a beautiful way. Only when the enemy refused to be convinced by discourse, he used force. For example, we quote his address at the time of the siege of Qasre Irani. Addressing the besieged Persians in the fortress he tried to convince them on the doctrines and the principles of Islam and said,

"I am your fellow countryman but Allah bestowed honour on me through Islam. O my brothers! You have no way out but to submit before Muslims. I advise you that you embrace Islam and become our

brethren. Join us and you will enjoy all the rights of the Muslims. You will be governed by the same law which governs the Muslims." This speech is quite a long one. He delivered such speeches for three days consecutively. When the Iranians did not concede, he conquered the fort by force.

Apart from the military talent, Hadrat Salman (Allah be pleased with him) was blessed with a beautiful combination of knowledge, character and fear of Allah. It is evident from details of his early life that he understood Zoroastrianism and Christianity fully well. And even when he followed those religions he did not believe in a creed without acting upon it. When he embraced Islam he became perfect model of Islam. In order to understand the principles and the practices of Islam he remained a constant companion of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Ummul Momeneen (Mother of the Faithful) Hadrat Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her) once said:

> "Salman used to sit with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) so late that we (the holy wives) feared lest our portion of the night might also be consumed in the sitting."

It is obvious that no one can realise the depth of the knowledge and understanding of a person who

received education in religion from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) with such care and devotion. All the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) acknowledged his knowledge and understanding. Some of them regarded him equal to Hakim Luqman in knowledge and wisdom. All of them agreed that apart from Zoroastrianism he had perfect knowledge of the earlier scriptures (Old and New Testament) and the last divine book (the Holy Qur'an). Further, Hadrat Salman had not only a theoretical but practical knowledge also of both the religions. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Salman is full of knowledge."

Besides his knowledge, Salman's practical life also won him a distinguished position amongst the devoted Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He followed, in letter and spirit, every word and action of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). In the last moments of his life, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) did not allow even a sum of four dinars to remain in his house and got them distributed among the poor. Hadrat Salman also followed the precedent of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in the matter of wealth and belongings. He had no house. So long as the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was alive,

he remained under his patrongage. Even after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) he did not have a house of his own. Somebody said, "Should I build a house for you." He said, "I do not need it." The man however insisted and said, "I shall make it as you wish." Hadrat Salman said, "may I know how?" He said, "It will be such a small house, that if one stands in it his head will touch the ceiling, and when he lies down his feet will touch the walls." Hadrat Salman agreed to a house of such dimensions.

Having heard from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that one's belongings should not exceed that of a traveller, he acted upon it throughout his life. Hadrat Saad bin Abi Waqqas portrayed his life thus:

> "Hadrat Salman was sick. I went to see him. He began to weep. I asked him what for was he weeping and said, "The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) departed from this world pleased with you. You will meet him again on the **Hauz–i–Kausar** (a fountain in paradise). You will also meet there with your other departed friends."

He said, "By Allah, I am not afraid of death. Neither have I any desire for the world. What I lament for is that I had promised the Holy Prophet

(peace be upon him) that my belongings would not be more than those of a traveller but now I find so many snakes around me."

Saad bin Abi Waqqas then said that his entire belongings, which he called snakes, consisted of a large bowl, a trough and a basin.

This happened just before his death. Even at the time when the Caliph appointed him the Governor of Madayen he led such a simple life that observers took him to be an ordinary labourer.

Once a person who mistook him for a labourer asked him to carry his luggage. He carried the weight on his shoulders and went along with him. When some of the passers by, who recognised him, saw him carrying the load, they saluted him and offered their services to carry the burden. The owner of the luggage was much ashamed and began to apologise. Hadrat Salman insisted, "I shall carry this load to your house. I cannot afford to lose the reward of my intention."

During the period of his Governorship, one of his friends came to see him. He found that Hadrat Salman was kneading the flour. He asked where had the servant gone. Salman replied, "He has gone out for some other work. I do not like to burden him with two responsibilities."

As Governor, Hadrat Salman received a handsome salary. He ruled over thirty thousand persons but his own condition was that he possessed only one long shirt in which he gathered dry wood. He used half of it as his bed and the other half as a cover. He distributed the whole of his salary amongst the poor and the needy. For himself he used to weave mats and give away one–third of his earning from this occupation too, by way of alms; one– third he reserved for his family and the rest he gave away to the students of Hadith of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

Despite this simplicity he hated the life of abstinence. His brother in Islam, Hadrat Abu Durda, was also endowed with the virtues of piety and fear of Allah. Hadrat Salman used to visit him off and on. Once he found the wife of Hadrat Abu Durda in a shabby condition (i.e. clad in very ordinary clothes and without any make–up etc.) He said, "Why have you made yourself so?" She said, "For whom should I adorn myself? Your brother does not care for all these things. He offers prayers throughout the night and observes fast during the day". Meanwhile Hadrat Abu Durda came in. He greeted Hadrat Salman and after enquiring about his health he asked his wife to serve the meal. She

complied and he requested Hadrat Salman to take the meals. He himself sat aloof as he was observing fast. Salman said, "I shall not eat unless you join me." At last he succeeded in getting his optional fast broken. Then he stayed with him at night also. When his brother got up for his usual prayers, he stopped him and said:

"You no doubt owe duty to your Allah, but your eyes too have some right on you. You do keep fasts and pray in the night but enjoy sleep as well as it is also imperative for you."

When Hadrat Abu Durda argued in his defence, he presented the case in the morning before the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Abu Durda "Salman understands Islam better than you."

On account of these qualities, Hadrat Salman was held in great esteem by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) as well as by all of his Companions. Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) offered him so much respect that whenever Hadrat Salman visited him he offered his own seat to him. Hadrat Siddiq Akbar (Allah be pleased with him) believed that to displease Salman was to invite the displeasure of Allah. Hadrat Siddiq Akbar (Allah be pleased with him) could never forget the incident

when once Abu Sufyan along with some other persons by passed Hadrat Suhaib, Hadrat Bilal and Hadrat Salman (Allah be pleased with them) and these three persons said, "no sword of Allah has yet touched the neck of His enemy, Abu Sufyan." Hadrat Abu Bakr said, "Why do you talk so impertinently about the chief of Quraish?"

Afterwards he complained of it to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) too. He said, "You have perhaps, displeased them, and you know, to displease them is to displease Allah." Hadrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) was very much sorry and at once rushed to beg pardon from those pious persons.

How did Salman Farsi achieve this position of eminence in Islam? It is evident from this discourse that he left his home and hearth, parents and relations, his country and his people in search of truth. When he found the truth he learnt its teachings and moulded his life according to its tenets. He held the Will of Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) supreme at every stage of his life. He did not forsake simplicity taught by Islam in his everyday life. He did not part with it even when he was appointed as a governor. There are many a lesson in the life of Hadrat Salman Farsi (Allah be pleased

with him) for the workers of the Islamic movement all over the world, whether they are in the preliminary stage or at the final stage of forming a state based on the principles of Islam. May Allah give us the strength and foresight to follow the footsteps of these great Muslims. Amen!

HADRAT SUHAIB RŪMI

(Allah be pleased with him)

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Suhaib is the first fruit from Rūm (Turkey)". It means that the first person from that land who embraced Islam was Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him).

Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) hailed from a village near the city of Mosul (in present–day Iraq, which was then under the Iranian empire), on the banks of River Tigris. His father was appointed by the Emperor of Iran as governor of Ubullah. The Rūmi armies usually fought with the Iranians. Once the Romans attacked Ubullah unexpectedly. Although the people of Ubullah defended it very bravely yet Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him), who was then a child only, was captured by the Rūmis during the onslaught. They carried him off along with other goods and booty. The poor father searched for him everywhere but to no avail. Failing to find out any trace of the child he lost all hopes and resigned himself to fate.

Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) was brought up amongst the Rūmis. When he grew up,

he was sold to a person who brought him as a slave to Makka. His master in Makka was so pleased with him once for some act of his that he set him free.

Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) passed his days like an outsider in Makka. He started some business in partnership with another person and became quite prosperous. He was a sociable person having a good sense of humour. In whichever gathering he participated, he made it lively with his interesting conversation. He had a long acquaintance with the Holy prophet (peace be upon him). He often met him and had conversation and exchange of views with him. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) greatly impressed him and Hadrat Suhaib adopted many good habits under his influence. When the city of Makka echoed with the call of the oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Hadrat Muhammad (peace be upon him), how could a man like Suhaib lag behined in submitting to the call of Truth! He embraced Islam at once with great eagerness and enthusiasm. He had neither any blood relations nor any supporter in Makka. How could the Quraish of Makka show any favour to Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) when they were extremely hard even on their own kith and kin who had turned Muslims. Taking him to be an outsider

everyone teased and tortured him as much as he could, but failed to shake his conviction in the truth of Islam. Muslims were at last directed by the Holy Prophet to migrate from Makka.

The story of Hadrat Suhaib's (Allah be pleased with him) migration is also one of the best examples set by the first believer in the oneness of Allah. When he gathered his belongings and prepared to leave for Madina, the residents of Makka rushed on him and warned, "You came here penniless and pauper. You earned all this wealth in Makka. Now you want to take it away with you. We shall not let you go with your wealth and other belongings."

Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him), pointed to his bow, and said, "O you Quraish of Makka! You should know that I am one of the most skillful archers and best marksman among you all. By Allah, so long as there is a single arrow left with me you cannot dare come near me. After that I shall fight with my sword. But if you desire to have my wealth and belongings and promise not to stand in my way I agree even to this bargain."

The Quraish agreed, and Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) turned his back upon his wealth and all the belongings and left for Madina empty handed, for the sake of Islam.

Deprived of all his belongings, when Sohaib reached Madina, he was almost finished with exhaustion and hunger. One of his eyes was badly swollen. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions who had preceeded him were sitting there and eating dates. Seeing the dates Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) could not restrain himself and fell upon them. Hadrat Umar (Allah be pleased with him) said, "O Prophet of Allah! Look at Suhaib! His eye is sore yet he is eating dates!" Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) had a very good sense of humour. He said, "I am eating from the other side which is alright." This prompt reply amused the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Having finished the dates, Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) narrated the whole story and said, "finding me alone the Quraish had detained me. At last I gave away all I had and got away from them." The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "you struck a profitable bargain."

After that the following verses of the Holy Qur'an were revealed by Allah:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّشْرِيْ نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَآءَ
مَرْضَاتِ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ رَءُوْفٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ

"Amongst the people there are some who, for the sake of seeking pleasure of Allah, bargain with there lives, and Allah is very kind to such people..."

(Al Baqarah)

In fact this pleasure of Allah and obedience to His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) were the greatest wealth of Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him). That is why he left his second homeland, Makka, and gave away the earnings of his whole life to be with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and other brother Muslims. He always put his life at stake even in the fiercest battles. He accompanied the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in every battle fought for the sake of Islam and displayed his best skill, specially in archery.

In old age he used to gather people around him and narrate his heroic deeds with great relish. In his manners and conduct he tried to fully follow the example of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). In entertaining the guests, helping the poor and giving away charity, he was so generous that people felt he was extravagant. Once when Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) tried to persuade him to exercise restraint, he repeated the following saying of the Holy Prophe (peace be upon him):

"Of you the best is he who feeds the poor and returns the salutations."

All the Companions, especially Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him), the second Caliph, paid him great respect. Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) had such a high opinion about him that on his deathbed he instructed that Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) shoud lead his funeral prayers and officiate as Imam and the Caliph till formal election of the new Caliph. Hadrat Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) performed these duties to the best of his ability. May Allah be kind upon him and help us follow his example.

HADRAT 'ABDUR REHMAN BIN 'AUF

(Allah be pleased with him)

Hadrat 'Abdur Rehman bin 'Auf (Allah be pleased with him) was one of the greatest followers and contemporaries of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He was a wealthy person. He was a merchant by profession. Besides his business, he owned an agricultural farm also. He worked on such a large scale that in a single unit of the farm he used to employ twenty camels at a time for watering the fields. Apart from his own business and farming the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had also given him a big piece of land. Allah had blessed his trade, farm and his land so much so that the three yielded him quite a big income. He himself used to say that I benefitted from any investment I made and any project I started.

His wealth and riches can be assessed by an instance. Once his merchandise reached Madina out of which seven hundred camels were loaded with wheat, flour and other food stuff. It does not mean that he enjoyed an eminent position in Islam on account of his wealth. Wealth is not a symbol of greatness and nobility in Islam. Nobility and great-

ness are measured according to the following verse of the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

"Before Allah more respectable is he who is the most fearful of disobedience to Allah.

Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf (Allah be pleased with him) was, no doubt, very rich but the wealth did not produce in him the capitalist mentality. His life was an example of this undeniable fact. The huge merchandise mentioned above also confirms this. When Hadrat Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her) heard about the arrival of this huge convoy of merchandise she narrated a **hadith** which stressed that the wealth often demeans a person. When Hadrat 'Abdur Rehman bin 'Auf (Allah be pleased with him) came to know of it, he at once rushed to Ummul Momeneen and said, "I make you a witness that I give away the whole of the merchandise convoy along with the camels in charity in the name of Allah."

Notwithstanding this instance he always spent his wealth generously for the cause of Islam.

When the great Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) were persuaded through Surah Baraat to spend their wealth in donations and charity, Hadrat 'Abdur Rehman bin 'Auf (Allah be pleased with him) offered half of his wealth for the cause of Islam. Still he was not satisfied. He offered another forty thousand Dinars next. Later, at a call of Jehad, he offered 500 horses and 500 camels.

An idea of his charitable nature and munificence may be had from the fact that he set free thirty slaves in a single day. Once he sold a piece of land for forty thousand Dinars all of which amount he gave away in the name of Allah. Even with this generosity he often feared that his wealth may prove harmful to him in the life hereafter. With this fear in mind he once went to Hadrat Umm–e–Salma (the mother of the faithful) and said, "Mother, I fear that excessive wealth may not doom me for ever." She advised, "Spend as much as you can in the name of Allah."

The fear of the Doomsday was so much dominant over him that whenever he was served with good food, he started weeping remembering the days when the Muslims could not get enough to satisfy their hunger. He used to say, "Mus'ab bin 'Umair was better than I. When he laid his life for

the cause of Islam he had only one sheet of cloth for his shroud. If his head was covered his feet were exposed and if the feet were covered his head was uncovered. Hadrat Hamza also passed away in the same state. He was also better than I. Now the conditions have changed and we are enjoying so many amenities of life that it appears as if we have received the reward of our good deeds in this worldly life itself." Saying so he would start weeping and withdraw from the meal.

Fear of Allah and the Doomsday had developed many virtues in him. The way in which he spent in the name of Allah has been described to some extent above. He also abhorred family and racial pride. He embraced Islam at the age of thirty when he had reached maturity. His original name was 'Abd-e-'Amar. Since according to Islam every person is the 'Abd (Slave) of Allah, the creator, and not of any creature, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) changed his name to 'Abdur Rahman. The slave of Allah accepted this name gladly and abandoned his family name. When the Muslims were permitted by Allah to migrate from Makka to Madina, nothing could stop him— neither the love of family nor the love of his birth place. When he reached Madina. the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) tied him in

brotherly bond with Saad bin Az Zabee, who was the richest and most generous of all Ansars. He took his homeless brother to his own house and said, "I give half of my wealth to you."

It has been observed generally that those who are wealthy are often very coward, weak, materialist and compromising, but Hadrat'Abdul Rahman bin 'Auf (Allah be pleased with him) so much feared Allah and the Doomsday that he could not even think of any thing evil. He was neither a coward. He took part in all the battles along with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and fought valiantly for the glory of Islam. In the battle of Badr it was he who pointed out Abu Jahl to the two boys who slew him. He fought so bravely in the battle of Uhud that he received more than twenty wounds on his body. His foot was very badly injured and even after having been cured he had to limp throughout the rest of his life.

On Sh'aban, the sixth, when he was leaving for the expedition of Daumatul Jundal, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) decorated his head with a turban with his own hands. He was also given the flag and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Go for the cause of Allah. Fight with those who are disobedient to Allah and indulge in vices.

But do not cheat anybody nor play any tricks. Do not kill the children. When you reach Daumatul Jundal present the teachings of Islam to the tribe of Kalb and when they embrace Islam, marry the daughter of their Chief."

Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf (Allah be pleased with him) acted according to the directions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and performed his task so amicably that all the people gladly embraced Islam within three days. He then married the daughter of the Chief of the tribe.

Besides enormous wealth, spirit of sacrifice, generosity, valour and chivalry, Allah had blessed him equally with the wealth of wisdom and intelligence. In the cause of Islam whatever counsel he gave to anybody it proved most suitable and fruitful. After the departure of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) when there arose the problem of his successor, he actively participated in settling the matter successfully. Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (Allah be pleased with him) always regarded him as a sincere adviser and always consulted him. At the time of the election of the second Caliph his opinion was the same as was given by the majority of the other great venerable Companions (Allah be pleased with them). Later when Hadrat 'Umar

Farooq (Allah be pleased with him), the second Caliph, constituted an Advisory Council to carry out the work of selecting the new caliph, Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf (Allah be pleased with him) was also included in it. During the reign of the second Caliph too he continued giving his advice with great sincerity and on many occasions great successes were achieved through his intelligent advice.

On many occasions his advice was eventually adopted by all the seasoned Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) such as in the matter of the battle of Nehawand in Iraq, the conquest of Iran and other such important issues. Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) had nominated him in the panel of the six persons out of whom one had to be chosen as the third Caliph but he withdrew his name. Again, when he voted for Hadrat Uthman (Allah be pleased with him) to be the third Caliph, all other Companions agreed with him. In short, he served the cause of Islam throughout his life with great sincerity and spirit of sacrifice.

He died at the age of seventy five. Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) stood by his coffin and paid tributes to him in these words:

> "O IIbn 'Auf! You drank the clean water of the world and avoided the impure one."

Hadrat Saad bin Abi Waqqas (Allah be pleased with him) paid homage to him in these words:

"Alas! that towering personality that looked high and unshakeable like a mountain has passed away!"

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) himself had a great regard for him. Once he had some Cross talk with Hadrat Khalid bin Waleed, the great military general of Islam. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) restrained Hadrat Khalid bin Waleed saying, "Khalid! Don't try to treat him at par with you. You know you cannot equal him even if you spend gold equal in weight to the mountain of Uhud, in the name of Allah."

His knowledge and wisdom, truthfulness and piety were such that in all complicated matters of jurisprudence and interpretation of the tenets of Islam he gave out his free and frank opinion to the Caliph, and it was always in perfect accord with Islamic principles. In the matter of inheritance and treatment with the non–Muslims his opinion was accepted by all venerable Companions (Allah be pleased with them). During the days of Hadrat 'Uthman Ghani (Allah be pleased with him) as Caliph when Hadrat Zubair filed a complaint against Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman, Hadrat 'Uthman Ghani

(Allah be pleased with them) made Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman himself the judge. After the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), the responsibility of looking after the Holy wives of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was entrusted to him. This shows the respect and confidence he enjoyed among the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). This respect and regard is enhanced further when we find that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) Had foretold in his life about Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman (Allah be pleased with him) being destined for the Paradise. This was because he served the cause of Islam with all the talents and resources at his command. Allah blessed him with wealth and riches and he spent it for seeking the pleasure of Allah. Allah gave him intelligence, knowledge and wisdom and he used all these faculties in promoting the cause of Islam. He was imbued with the spirit of self–respect and modesty. Although a very rich person he never took anything other than ordinary food.

HADRAT SAEED BIN 'AMIR

(Allah be pleased with him)

A Governor of the Days of Caliphate

Hadrat Saeed bin' Amir (Allah be pleased with him) is a Companion of the Prophet who although embraced Islam late in the Holy Prophet's life (peace be upon him), still benefitted much from his company and teachings. After embracing Islam he became such a model of piety and righteousness that we can learn many a lesson from his model/character. His life also serves as a monument for the civil servants of a state which claims to be Islamic. It is also an example for the secular states that profess and proclaim democracy and equality for all their citizens.

Hadrat Saeed bin 'Amir (Allah be pleased with him) embraced Islam before the battle of Khyber. Soon after he migrated, leaving behind his home and hearth, and went over to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in Madina. he took part in all the other battles alongwith the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and showed great courage, bravery and faithfulness for the cause of Islam.

During the caliphate of Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him), the Second Caliph, Hadrat Abu 'Ubaidah (Allah be pleased with him) asked the Caliph for reinforcement in the battle of Yermook. He sent Hadrat Saeed bin 'Amir (Allah be pleased with him) with reinforcements. Hadrat Saeed performed many a heroic deeds in this battle. Later the post of governor of Hamas fell vacant due to the death of Hadrat 'Abbas bin Ghanam (Allah be pleased with him). Hadrat Saeed was appointed as the Governor of Hamas by the second Caliph.

During the tenure of his governorship somebody sent a complaint to Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) that the governor suffered very often with fits of insanity. Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) summoned him at once for investigation. Saeed bin 'Amir (Allah be pleased with him) entered Madina in a state of simplicty unknown in the history of governors. He held only a stick in his hand and a bowl. Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) said, "Is this all you have to live with?" He said, "What else is required? I eat in this bowl and hang the travelling kit on this stick."

Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) again said, "It is reported to me that you suffer from fits of insanity. He said, "No."

"Then what about this report against you?" asked Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him).

Hadrat Saeed bin 'Amir replied, "It is true. But it is not due to any kind of mental illness. You remember the event of the murder of Hadrat Habib bin Addi. At that time I was an eye witness to that heinous murder. Hadrat Habib bin Addi* cursed the Quraish when he was tortured. Since I also belong to Quraish, I shudder with fear and lose consciousness when I remember his curse."

His explanation cleared the matter and Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) desired him to join his duty in Hamas but he hesitated to go back on his job. Hadrat 'Umar iinsisted, so he had to comply with the orders and resumed duty in Hamas.

This is only one example. There are many other examples too, of his piety and righteousness. Only a couple of those examples are reproduced hereunder:

* Habib bin Addi (Allah be pleased with him) was waylaid and kidnapped by the infidel Quraish who mercilessly tortured him to death. At every prick of spear and sword, he said, "All these wounds are a thousand time better than any harm done to even a hair of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)."

1. Once when he was the Governor of Hamas, Hadrat Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) visited Hamas to arrange state help for the poor and needy over there. He ordered his staff to prepare a list of the poor. When the list was presented to him, he found that it included a name— Saeed bin 'Amir. On enquiry he was told that the name referred to no other person but the Governor himself. Hadrat 'UmarFarooq (Allah be pleased with him) was stunned and said, "Your ruler! A poor person! What do you say? What does he do with his salary?" The people told the Caliph that he never even touched his salary and always distributed it among the poor and the needy.

   On learning of such selflessness on the part of the Govenor, Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) began to weep and ordered a purse of a thousand Dinars to be sent to him at once so that he could meet his requirements. As soon as Hadrat Saeed bin 'Amir (Allah be pleased with him) saw the purse, he recited, "*Inna lillah-e-wa Inna Ilaihe Rajeoon*" (To Him we belong, and to Him have we to return). His wife was alarmed and asked, "What is the matter? Has the Caliph, God forbid, met some ac-

cident?" He said, "No, something more fearful has happened." His wife again asked, what calamity has befallen you?" He said, "It is even more terriible than a calamity." Not understanding anything the preplexed wife said, "What is the matter after all? Tell me please." He said, "The world has set many snares for me." She advised him to forestall them. Accordingly he put away the whole amount in a big trough and himself spent the whole night offering prayers. In the morning a contingent of Muslim army passed by that way and he donated the entire amount for their expenses.

2. Needless to say how much popular a governor like Saeed bin 'Amir would have been among the people. Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) heard much about the propsperity of the people of Hamas and the popularity Hadrat Saeed enjoyed there as Governor. Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allàh be pleased with him) asked him why his people liked him so much. He answered, "I take care of them and also sympathise with them." This reply pleased Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) very much. He presented him with a gift of ten thousand Dinars which he declined to

accepted saying, "My income from my horses and my slaves is sufficient for me. I wish to serve the Muslims for the pleasure of Allah alone." Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) insisted, "Do accept the gift please. Once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) gave me some money as gift and I also hesitated like you, whereupon the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) advised me to accept a gift which Allah may give to you without your asking for it."

These instances may lead some to think that one loses interest in this world and its attractions when he gets quite old. But it must be noted that Hadrat Saeed bin 'Amir died at the age of forty only, and these instances refer to a period when he was in the full prime of his life.

HADRAT 'AMMAR BIN YASIR

(Allah be pleased with him)

Hadrat Yasir, father of Hadrat 'Ammar, belonged to Yemen. He had many brothers. One of them was once lost and nobody ever heard of him thereafter. Yasir, along with his two brothers, went in search of him. During this search he reached Makka. The two brothers returned home from Makka but Yasir did not go back and made Makka his home town. He developed friendly relations with Abu Hudaifa, a dignitary of Makka. He gave him in marriage one of his very talented and intelligent maid servants, Samiyyah. This lady gave birth to Hadrat 'Ammar (Allah be pleased with him).

Hadrat 'Ammar was one of those fortunate and dauntless Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) who preceded many others in embracing Islam. Hadrat 'Ammar embraced Islam when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had taken refuge in the house of hadrat Arqam bin Abi Arqam along with his thirty or thirty–two followers owing to the unbearable tortures and persecution of the infidels of Makka. It was under these conditions that his

father Yasir, his mother Sammiyyah, his brother 'Abdullah and the rest of his family accepted Islam.

Hadrat 'Ammar and his family had no family links with the people of Makka. Neither had they any wealth or high position to win for them any support from any one in Makka. Only Abu Hudaifa patronized them but he died before the dawn of Islam.

Finding them helpless, and having no voice or support in the city, the infidels of Makka subjected them to acute torture as a punishment for their embracing Islam. They were forced to lie down on the extremely hot sand right at noon. They were made to walk over burning cinders. They kept them immersed in the water for hours together but could not succeed in making any one of those lovers of Islam waver from the right path.

Hadrat Samiyyah, mother of Hadrat 'Ammar, although a woman, was a staunch and enthusiastic worker of the Islamic movement. Abu Jehl could not tolerate anybody's enthusiasm for Islam. One day, in a fit of rage, he struck her below the navel with his spear with such force that the poor lady died on the spot. Hadrat 'Ammar's father, Yasir, and his brother 'Abdullah were also tortured to death by the infidels.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) often shed tears on the helplessness and the miserable condition of this family. Whenever he passed by them and found them holding firm to their faith under severe torture and harsh treatment, he would say:

"O family of 'Ammar! I congratulate you. The Eternal Gardens are waiting for you."

Once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saw that the infidels of Makka had made Hadrat 'Ammar lie down on the burning cinders and he was quite helpless. Seeing this, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed for him:

"O fire! cool down for 'Ammar as thou didst for (peace be upon him)."

When 'Ammar spoke of his helplessness and misery to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), he advised him to remain steadfast and prayed for him:

"O Allah! grant salvation to Yasir's family in the Hereafter."

They endured untold hardships for a long time. At last Allah helped them out of their misfortune. The Muslims were ordered to migrate. Hadrat 'Ammar first went to Abyssinia and then migrated to Madina. Seeing his firm belief, faithfulness and truthfulness, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)

prayed for him to be safe from the Devil and acclaimed him as a test of good and evil. Whenever he saw 'Ammar, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Faith and conviction run as blood in the veins of 'Ammar." Many a time he would say, "Alas 'Ammar! You will be killed by a group of rebels."

On the basis of these sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), people used to settle their mutual feuds in the light of the advice of Hadrat 'Ammar. During the Caliphate of Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him), when Muslims began to quarrel among themselves and were divided in two groups, those who were initially neutral later followed 'Ammar and supported Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him). In this quarrel there were many fierce and lamentable encounters between the Muslims. In one of these, two persons killed Hadrat 'Ammar and carried his head to their officer. In order to get reward each of them claimed to have killed Hadrat Ammar. Hadrat Abdullah bin 'Amar bin al'As was also present there. When he saw them boasting and claiming the credit for the killing, he said, "Don't try to take the responsibility of slaying 'Ammar because I have heard from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that the rebel group will kill 'Ammar. 'Abdullah's father, Hadrat 'Amar

bin al'Aas was also there. He remarked, "By Allah both of them are quarrelling to go into Hell!

Throughout his life Hadrat 'Ammar always sought the pleasure of Allah. He fought with great valour and courage in all the battles against the infidels. After the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) he also practicipated in all important battles fought during the reigns of the first four Caliphs. There is a famous event of the Battle of Yemama, which apart from being interesting, carries a great lesson for the Muslims.

In the battle of Yemama, Hadrat 'Ammar was making fierce onslaughts on the enemy. All of a sudden one of his ears was chopped off and dropped on the ground but he remained busy in Jehad quite indifferent to the loss of his ear. In the mean time he felt that the Muslims were showing signs of weakness and were retreating. He climbed over a lofty rock and yelled out in a loud voice:

"O Muslims! You are running away from Paradise. Look at me. I am 'Ammar bin Yasir. Come with me. Follow me."

On hearing this call, the morale of the Muslim army was strengthened and making a strong onslaught they won the battle. Afterwards, when he was the Governor of Koofa, during the Caliphate of

Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him), a dignitary of Koofa desired him to agree to one of his proposals, but Hadrat 'Ammar refused. The man got infuriated and talked to him in a rude manner. "O man with one ear!" Hadrat 'Ammar, though a Governor, controlled his anger and said, "Alas! You have abused my best and dearest ear."*

Apart from being true and faithful to Islam, Hadrat 'Ammar was also one of the most intelligent Companions (Allah be pleased with them). He held many important posts under the Islamic Government. When he was appointed as Governor of an important place like Koofa he performed his duties with great ability. But he was not usually happy with such appointments. He liked simplicity, showing hospitality to the guests and selflessness. Once Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) took him along to inspect a canal. The inspection took quite a long time. Hadrat 'Ammar was tired and began to doze. He lay down under a tree on the bare ground and fell asleep.

Hadrat 'Ammar loved to offer prayers. He said his prayers with great devotion and concentration. Often he spent the whole night in offering prayers,

* Because that ear was cut away in Jehad.

reciting the Holy Qur'an's and sacred verses. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) recited a verse with reference to Hadrat 'Ammar:

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَانِتٌ آنَاءَ الَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَّقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ
وَيَرْجُوا رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهٖ

"Is not the person who stands in his prayers and kneels down on the ground through the night fearful of the hereinafter and hopeful of his Allah's kindness?"

Hadrat 'Ammar attained the age of 91 years, but he never looked old. Till the end he tried to surpass others in the cause of Islam. He often prayed to Allah:

"O Allah! If I knew I would please Thee by jumping down from the mountain, burning myself in the fire or by drowing in the water, I would obtain Thy pleasure at all costs. I go into the Holy war only to secure Thy pleasure. I hope Thou wilt reward me with success!"

Allah, no doubt, gave him success. He was martyred in the cause of Islam and Allah was pleased with him and he who pleases Allah is successful.